

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MAGAZINE



SPRING 2022, VOLUME 114, NUMBER 3



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VOLUME 114, NUMBER 3, SPRING 2022

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EDITOR'S NOTES

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

BY LAURA DEMANSKI, AM'94

In spring a Hyde Parker's fancy turns to ducklings, but last week a rarer bird flew down and sat for a good 20 minutes on the fire escape outside my kitchen: a kestrel (identified with help from Instagram friends). I wasn't watching for her—I was just fortunate to be present at the right moment, making a late cup of coffee on a Saturday afternoon. I took advantage of the serendipity, planting myself by the window to admire her.

The bird rewarded my attention, turning around mid-perch to show all sides: a front fluffily unkempt, almost silly; then her sleek, patterned predator's back. With tail feathers facing me, she swiveled her head several times to return my stare. I was glad to not be a mouse.

That was sheer luck, but it's nice to have a neighborhood spot, Botany Pond, that offers wildfowl on demand this time of year. Struck with spring fever, the *Magazine* staff was inspired to decorate this issue's cover with plants and animals that have lived and thrived in that well-trodden spot over the 125 years since it opened. The populations can wax and wane; our cover represents a kind of transhistorical catalog and includes but a fraction of the pond's sometime inhabitants. We hope it will hold your gaze for a happy while.

Still chasing paper

You might notice that this issue is a bit shorter than usual as supply chain problems continue. To bridge the gap in our paper supply, we've moved a couple of items online: an alumni essay by nurse **Theresa Brown**, AB'87, PhD'94, and an excerpt from the recently reissued memoir of Gertrude Beasley, AM 1918. Both writers cast a sharp eye on hardship, wringing something valuable from suffering through their powers of keen scrutiny. Learn about Brown and Beasley in "Health Care from the Other Side," page 18, and "A Writer, Lost and Found," page 22, before reading their own well-observed stories at mag.uchicago.edu.

You say goodbye, I say hello

In March we were sad to bid farewell to **Andrew Peart**, AM'16, PhD'18, alumni news editor since 2017. We miss Andrew's well-wrought words and affable presence, and look forward to turning the tables and printing his alumni news as we hear of his new projects and pursuits.

In April, however, we were thrilled as we welcomed former contributing editor **Maureen Searcy** as the *Magazine's* associate editor for science. Maureen's stories have long graced these pages, bringing to life UChicago's illustrious scientific past and present, such as in her 2020 cover profile of Mr. Tornado, Ted Fujita, and last year's deep dive into professor **Andrea King's** work to understand alcohol use disorder. In Maureen's hands, the future of UChicago science will be just as compellingly told. ♦

SPRING 2022

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KEY

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2. Japanese Maple
3. Bumblebee
4. Rhododendron
5. Green Darner Dragonfly
6. Yellow Waxbells
7. Mallard Hen
8. Rose
9. Bluebells
10. Pigeon
11. Eastern Gray Squirrel
12. Downy Woodpecker
13. Chinese Praying Mantis
14. Daylily
15. Meadow Rue
16. Crabapple
17. Azalea
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19. Ginkgo
20. Iris
21. Twelve-Spotted Skimmer
22. Honey Locust
23. Petasites Japonicus
24. Bergenia
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28. White-Marked Tussock Moth
29. Fern
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A writer, lost and found *By Susie Allen, AB'09*

Nearly a century after it was banned, Gertrude Beasley's (AM 1918) memoir of her Texas upbringing reaches a new generation of readers.

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Family doctor *By Susie Allen, AB'09*

Trained as a cochlear implant surgeon, **Dana Suskind** has taken on a new role as an advocate for American parents.

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Off the shelf *By Jeff Deutsch*

Selling books is unlike selling anything else. The Seminary Co-op director counts the ways.

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Recipe for success *By Jeanie Chung*

Mealtime conversation with the Korean Vegan. Plus: Two essays from *The Korean Vegan Cookbook* by **Joanne Lee Molinaro**, JD'04.



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LETTERS

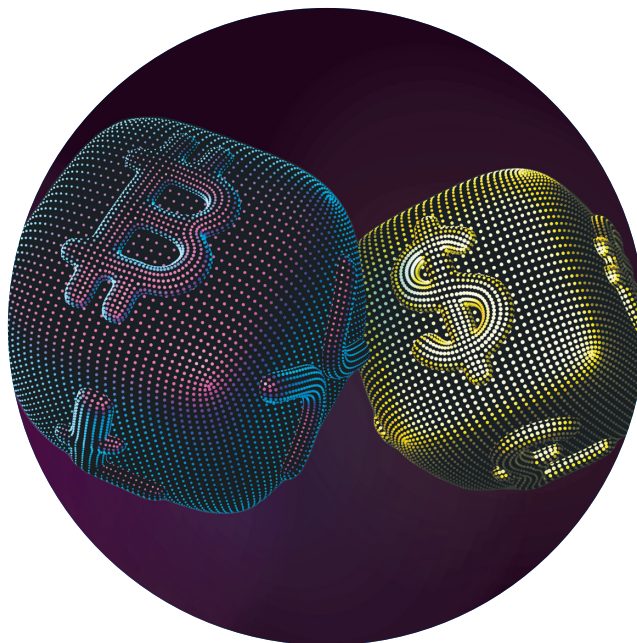
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Greener greens and pastures

In typical Chicago fashion, John A. List's article "Optimal Quitting" (Winter/22) led to personal reflections on my own career. It began with an opportunity afforded by a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and a letter from Norman Maclean, PhD'40, encouraging me to come to Chicago. When I began teaching in 1968 I didn't exactly "quit" anything, but I made a major change of direction. I decided not to write about late 19th-century American novels. Instead I applied the humanities approaches I had developed to the study of popular commercial television fiction. There was little analysis of TV from this perspective, so I took the opening, and my work led to a very successful academic career, most of it spent at the University of Texas at Austin.

In 2001 I moved to the University of Georgia and retired 12 years later as director of the George Foster Peabody Awards. At UGA I experienced another feature of Professor List's elegant essay. On my 66th birthday a card from my daughter in Austin contained a handwritten note: "You have six lessons at the University of Georgia golf course." Again, I seized an opportunity. Retired in Austin, I play twice a week with friends. I'm the oldest. Most of them began golfing as preteens and regularly score in the 70s or 80s. My scores average around 100. But I know I'm maximizing the benefits of my time. On days when my score is 105, I do have, as List says, the "heartbreak" of investing time in something that isn't working out. (It's a hard game.) But on days when I manage a 93 or 94, the joy means I won't be quitting. My change of direction certainly "scaled up," and I have one hole in one to go with it.

Horace Newcomb, AM'65, PhD'69
AUSTIN, TEXAS



Unaccounted for

Eswar Prasad, PhD'92, leaves out perhaps the most important (and devastating) consequence of the move away from cash ("Cash Out," Winter/22). The FDIC noted that in 2019, 5.4 percent of US households (about 7.1 million) were "unbanked"; that is, no one in the household had any bank accounts. The most cited reason for being unbanked was "don't have enough money to meet minimum balance requirements." Morning Consult found that unbanked individuals were more likely to be younger and poorer, and less likely to identify as White. And the Federal Reserve found that 21 percent of Americans did not have a credit or debit card. So if cash goes away, how will these individuals pay for things? The article states that "most of us are already accustomed to banking from our laptops or paying the babysitter via Venmo." But "most of us" isn't all of us, and millions of people who don't have bank accounts—let alone laptops—will be left out of this "digital revolution."

Victor S. Sloan, AB'80
FLEMINGTON, NEW JERSEY

If Eswar Prasad is right that money will go digital, how will that work for low-income people who work off the books? The case seems to embed a class assumption.

Richard Hoehn, AM'68, PhD'72
ADELPHI, MARYLAND

As mentioned in the story, Prasad believes a post-cash future includes systems to ensure the unbanked and those with low incomes can participate. He elaborated in a recent MIT Technology Review article: "This shift may look like a potential driver of inequality: if cash disappears, one imagines, that could disenfranchise the elderly, the poor, and others at a technological disadvantage. In practice, though, cell phones are nearly at saturation in many countries. And digital money, if implemented correctly, could be a big force of financial inclusion for households with little access to formal banking systems."—Ed.

A living art

I liked the profile of Jeri Lynne Johnson, AM'05, and her Black Pearl

iStock/maxkabaiov

Chamber Orchestra (“Orchestrating Change,” Winter/22). Such programs as hers will help keep classical music alive and open to more people. The article mentioned that she received the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship, which was founded by Marin Alsop. Ms. Alsop was the conductor for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music for 25 years here in Santa Cruz, California. Those of us living here were fortunate to see her conduct and to be exposed to lots of new music. Similarly, Johnson and her chamber orchestra are offering gifts to those who can hear them perform.

Nick Royal, MAT’69
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA

Campus safety

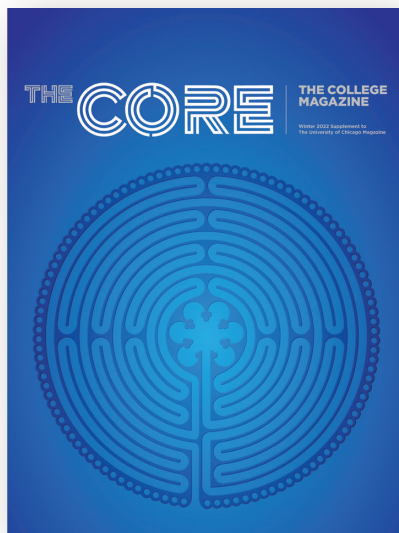
President Paul Alivisatos and Provost Ka Yee C. Lee write in the latest *Magazine* (“A Message on Safety,” On the Agenda, Winter/22): “We must do more to support the social and economic health of the communities surrounding the University to address the root causes of violence.” The University has been hand-wringing like this since I was growing up and getting mugged in Hyde Park in the 1960s and 1970s. Worry less about root causes and more about the social justice policies like slap-on-the-wrist probations and no-cash or low-cash bail that put criminals back on the street. It is commendable that the University and city are increasing foot patrols for now. But stop and frisk should be in every beat cop’s tool kit. Armed robbers would be less likely to cruise Hyde Park looking for defenseless victims if they risked getting caught with an illegal firearm in their pants. Let’s spend less time studying crime and more of it seeing that criminals are put where they belong: in jail.

Benj Pollock, LAB’73
SEATTLE

I read with great interest the material on campus safety. The safety measures are impressive. It reminded me that we actually had a problem with violence on the campus during my undergraduate years (1955–58).

We had two measures. First the Chicago Police Department developed what were called “flying squadrons.” These were teams of two officers on motorcycles driving around the campus looking for suspicious activity. If you were running across the Midway, you were likely to get stopped and asked why. A second measure was that the fraternities developed small groups of members who, along with large dogs like shepherds and Dobermans, walked the campus looking for gangbangers. Most of the problems were caused by gang members. Physical assaults and muggings were the main problems, not shootings. But it is worth remembering that trouble on the campus is not new, and that the University has always worked hard to minimize it.

Robert B. Bloom, SB’58
HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS



The twisting path

I recently read my alumni magazine and was captivated by the *Core* story about labyrinths (“How to Make a Labyrinth,” Winter/22). Thank you for sharing this interesting community tradition and profiling the person behind it. Although I don’t recall seeing any labyrinths on the quads as an undergrad, the article provided ample fodder for me to imagine what it might look like.

Shola Farber, AB’12
EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

Charm offensive

Where in the world did you get the quirky, charming stories in the Winter/22 issue of the *Core*? Although I probably have not read much of the magazine since its inception, I did love reading about the baby namer (“The Baby Namer”), the ice cream entrepreneurs (“Frönen by the Numbers”), and the adventurous trip from the Amazon (“Young Man and the Sea”). Congratulations on the Winter issue.

Diane Currano, AB’69
CHICAGO

On Core editor Carrie Golus’s (AB’91, AM’93) behalf, thanks for the kind words! For readers who are unfamiliar with the quirks and charms of the Core, it is the Magazine’s biannual supplement focusing on the undergraduate College and is mailed to College alumni and parents. The Core is available for all to read at mag.uchicago.edu/thecore.—Ed.



Core connections

As I read the Summer/21 issue of the *Core* cover to cover in one sitting, it brought back memories—triggered by not just one but multiple articles. I was a contemporary of Carl Sagan, AB’54, SB’55, SM’56, PhD’60, a fellow member of the Ryerson Astronomical Society (of which he was president). I was already an avid reader of science fiction and suspect Sagan was one also, particularly because of his novel *Contact* (1985), written a number of years later and made into a movie starring Jodie Foster. I do not, however, recall him being a member of another UChicago-sponsored club devoted to science fiction (but not fantasy), which included many adult writers of the genre who were most kind to me, a mere 15-year-old undergraduate.

In reading the article about Professor Roy Mackal (“Roy Mackal’s Wild Speculation”), I was shocked that many of his fellow faculty members ostracized him because of his pursuit of supposedly extinct species (even though he employed strict scientific controls rather than just speculation fueled by a desire to make it so). Carl obviously believed that intelligent life could evolve on planets outside our solar system, but I wonder if his colleagues studying planetary systems at Cornell University agreed with him—although Donald Keyhoe had already published *The Flying Saucers Are Real* (1950) and Erich von Däniken his book *Chariots of the Gods? Unsolved Mysteries of the Past* (1969).

I noticed other interlocking themes in that same issue. Would some readers of the *Core*, had it omitted photographs, believe that Nestor the Midway Cat was a figment of imagination akin to Nessie, the Loch Ness Monster? Would students in Leila Brammer’s Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse be comfortable debating the pros and cons of Mackal’s lifelong pursuit? Would Rep. Andy Kim’s (AB’04) admonition to find middle ground through listening remind

people to listen to speakers espousing an opposing viewpoint?

Peter Clauss, AB’55
NEWTOWN SQUARE, PENNSYLVANIA



The fast track

Andrew Peart’s (AM’16, PhD’18) article “Undercover Man” (Fall/21) was not only a fascinating piece about a unique Hyde Park/U of C character, the late Sam Greenlee, EX’57; it also filled in a gap in my memory about the early-to-mid-1950s. I had often wondered if the author of *The Spook Who Sat By the Door* (1969) was the same Sam Greenlee whom I knew as a fellow member of Edward “Ted” Haydon’s (LAB’29, PhB’33, AM’54) U of C Track Club. The article verified that they were one and the same.

I knew Sam as a superb half-miler. One other Ted Haydon/U of C Track Club memory: along with other members, I enjoyed an evening with Dick Gregory in the early days of his rise as an iconic figure of the civil rights movement. Gregory had been a club member with Ted, who introduced him that night as a rising local comedian. Such an exciting time, and what

Once I started at the coffee shop, I never wanted to leave. I was taken into the Swift community without reservation, and I loved them back.

a yeasty place was Hyde Park in the 1950s! I only regret that my acquaintance with Sam ended as we took somewhat different paths. I’ll make up for that loss in part by tracking down and enjoying his videos and written works. Thanks to Peart and the *Maga-zine* for reminding me of how privileged I was to have been in Hyde Park during those exciting years.

Alan D. Wade, PhD’60
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA



Divine beans, and beings


Your utterly unexpected picture of the Divinity School coffee shop in full swing brought me the keenest recollections (“Where God Drinks Coffee,” Alumni News, Fall/21).

In case you don’t know, that picture was almost certainly taken in 1983. The man behind the counter on the left is Rick Rosengarten, AM’88, PhD’94. On the right is Glenn Hewitt, PhD’86, who by then was probably the manager of the coffee shop. Both were students in the Divinity School at the time, and both went on to have noteworthy academic careers—Rick at the Divinity School, where he is currently associate professor of religion and literature, and Glenn at Maryville College for a tragically short time.

At that time, everybody who worked in the coffee shop was a student in the Divinity School with one exception: me. I was a student in the College, but Joe Price, AM’79, PhD’82, the resident head of my house (Bishop House, fourth floor of Shoreland) and the manager before Glenn, needed an extra pair of hands one quarter and I was available. Once I started at the cof-

From left: photo courtesy Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation, River Campus Libraries, University of Rochester; Photography by Bill Mudge, AB’83; Copyright 2021, The Chicago Maroon. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

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fee shop, I never wanted to leave. I was taken into the Swift community without reservation, and I loved them back.

And then there were the customers—professors, Div School students, undergrads, the Plant Department guys, the U of C Press graphics people, clergy of every denomination. You never knew who would come through the door, or what they would be talking about as they arrived. You just knew that every day would be an adventure.

I sometimes think that my most important educational experience at the U of C was to go through the daily rhythm of life for a few years in the company of a bunch of people who were individually and collectively committed to a rigorous search for transcendent meaning, and who saw that as entirely compatible with making sure the floor was swept, keeping the shelves stocked, and brewing a decent cup of coffee.

My one regret is not having thanked all of my coworkers—and especially Glenn, while he was still with us—for the world that they shared with me. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart, and thank you to the *Magazine* for giving me a chance to do something about that.

Jacob Thiessen, AB'85
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

A generous mentor

I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Professor Walter Kaegi this spring. A giant in the field of Byzantine history, Professor Kaegi was not only a remarkable scholar but also a devoted mentor to his students.

UChicago News's obituary highlighted Professor Kaegi's dedication to and impact on his doctoral students. But as one of the last undergraduate students to have the honor of having Kaegi as my thesis adviser, I will remember him for the time and lessons he was willing to share with younger students.

While I took five scheduled courses on Byzantine history with Kaegi, the most impactful course was an indi-

vidual study during my third year on the role of the Armenian minority inside the Byzantine Empire, a topic that would ultimately become the subject of my undergraduate thesis. Kaegi dedicated an hour or more each week to discuss the subject, and we continued to have these weekly conversations throughout my final year, up until I submitted my thesis. His dedication to teaching and willingness to share his time and knowledge were remarkable.

Outside the classroom, he clearly enjoyed life at the University, sharing stories about how his Russian fur hat had once been a Scav item and attending the annual Sophie Day at Breckinridge House, where I was an RA. He also shared his insights on how the University had changed over his ten-

He clearly enjoyed life at the University, sharing stories about how his Russian fur hat had once been a Scav item.

ure in an interview we published in the *Chicago Journal of History*.

My last time seeing Professor Kaegi in person was as he was packing up his office for retirement and I was leaving Chicago to start law school. I will continue to remember, and attempt to emulate, his passion for teaching and readiness to share his knowledge and experience with others.

Michael Goodyear, AB'16
LONG ISLAND CITY, NEW YORK

Grace and greatness

In 1967–68, I was in the MBA program at the old location on East Delaware Place. I was working as a programmer in the early days of computers, in high demand working 50–60 hours per week, married with two kids, and stretching to make ends meet. I still had student loans from undergraduate and graduate school. We lived in Rog-

ers Park, and we didn't own a car, so I got around via public transportation such as buses and the "L."

My closest "L" stop was several blocks away, and on late blustery winter nights after class, the walk was uncomfortable at best. A fellow student, whom I had gotten to know through several classes together, was Willie Davis, MBA'68 (Deaths, Spring/20). Willie was a defensive end for the Green Bay Packers. He was a ferocious football player who would be voted into the Hall of Fame, among other accolades. I remember the contrast between the gouges out of his knuckles and his mild nature. Off the field, he was one of the nicest men I ever met: calm, collected, even gracious. He was about 10 years older than me and seemed to have brotherly kindness toward me.

On those cold winter nights, when I was tired and anxious to get home, he would drive me to my "L" stop. He told me he and his wife had gotten big, beautiful Lincoln Continentals for his doing a commercial. I thought that was so cool. When we graduated, I think he bought a Budweiser franchise in California (great timing, no doubt), while I went on to build large global computer systems (pre-internet). I never got a chance to thank him after we parted ways, but I will always consider it an honor to have known him, ever so briefly, through our discussions during those short car trips to my "L" stop.

Charles D. Patton, MBA'68
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

CORRECTIONS

The obituary for Mihály Csikszentmihályi, AB'60, PhD'65, in the Winter/22 issue misstated where he was born and his early history. Csikszentmihályi was the son of a Hungarian diplomat and was born in Italy. To escape the rise of communism in Hungary, his family returned to Italy in 1947. While on vacation in Switzerland, Csikszentmihályi heard a lecture by Carl Jung and decided to study psychology in the United States. We regret the errors and have updated the notice online.

PARTNERING FOR INNOVATION

BY JUAN DE PABLO

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR SCIENCE, INNOVATION,
NATIONAL LABORATORIES, AND GLOBAL INITIATIVES
AND LIEW FAMILY PROFESSOR OF MOLECULAR ENGINEERING,
PRITZKER SCHOOL OF MOLECULAR ENGINEERING

As executive vice president for science, innovation, national laboratories, and global initiatives, I have had the unique opportunity to lead our efforts to create new initiatives and partnerships involving collaborators with a broad range of backgrounds and areas of expertise, all with the common goal of amplifying the University's impact, as well as that of our partners. This year our office launched a number of programs that are already starting to bear fruit.

At the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, we apply world-class expertise from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business to bring new ideas and breakthrough research to market. By working with faculty across the University, we seek to translate our university's discoveries into new products and services that help others. We support students, alumni, faculty, staff, and South Side community members without a UChicago affiliation to turn their ideas into scalable businesses.

Last year our office launched Duality, the first US start-up accelerator exclusively focused on supporting early-stage quantum companies. A partnership with the Polsky Center, Chicago Quantum Exchange, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Argonne National Laboratory, and Chicago nonprofit P33, Duality is representative of our efforts to forge vibrant partnerships that build on regional strengths to improve our intellectual and entrepreneurial ecosystem. The six companies in Duality's



first cohort have already made headlines with new funding, milestones, and awards, and the second cohort will be announced this spring.

Prototype for Success, launched through a partnership between the Polsky Center, Career Advancement, the Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering, and the College, is designed to prepare UChicago undergraduates for careers in emerging technology. The competitive program is open to all incoming first-years and encourages applications from Black, Hispanic, and women students, who are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM disciplines).

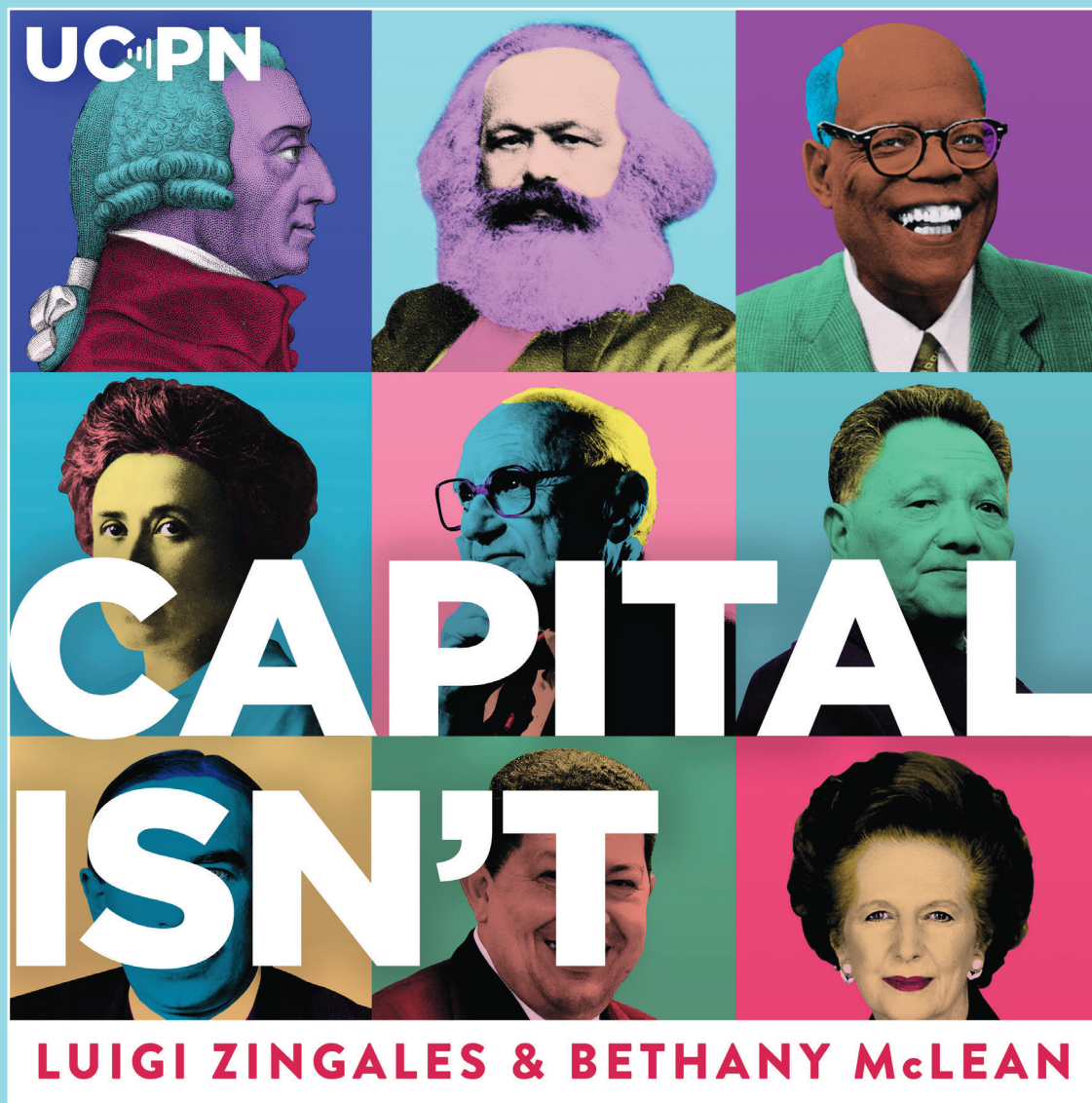
Our office is also responsible for the two US Department of Energy national laboratories operated and managed by UChicago: Argonne and Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. Through the UChicago Joint Task Force Initiative, or JTFI, we support research and many new initiatives that bring to the fore the talent, creativity, and scale of the University and the labs' combined efforts. This year alone, JTFI seed grant programs have supported collaborative research in quantum sciences, artificial intelligence, sustainability, medical radioisotopes, and

energy and climate. On the talent development front, a JTFI postdoctoral fellowship program developed by Fermilab and UChicago will support innovative research and seek to increase the diversity of Fermilab researchers working on fundamental questions of matter and energy.

The Polsky Center works closely with the national labs, as two newly launched programs serve to highlight. The Lab Innovation Fellows program supports individual researchers at Argonne and Fermilab in exploring commercialization paths for technologies, empowering the fellows to think about how their innovations could eventually benefit society and industries outside of the lab. The Strategic Program for Innovation at the National Laboratories promotes entrepreneurial thinking at the labs. In classes taught by UChicago and Chicago Booth faculty, industry experts, scientists, and staff, participants develop an entrepreneurial mindset, skills, and strategies that can be applied to all aspects of their careers.

This work is not confined to Chicago. Our office just hosted two exclusive workshops at the UChicago Center in Paris focused on quantum science, engineering, and innovation, and on materials for energy and sustainability. The goal is to connect the University with European industry leaders to foster collaboration among experts in areas of innovation that are critical to our future. And this summer we and Chicago Booth will host two workshops in London in the areas of entrepreneurship in artificial intelligence and data science, and in quantum information sciences.

We are excited about these initiatives and hope many of you will get involved with innovation at UChicago. ♦



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UCHICAGO JOURNAL

RESEARCH AND NEWS IN BRIEF

SHOW SOME SPINE

A recent exhibition at the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center highlighted the evolution of bookbinding from the 16th century to the present—with this large-scale reproduction of a rare and lavishly decorated edition of *A Christmas Carol* taking center stage.

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Star search

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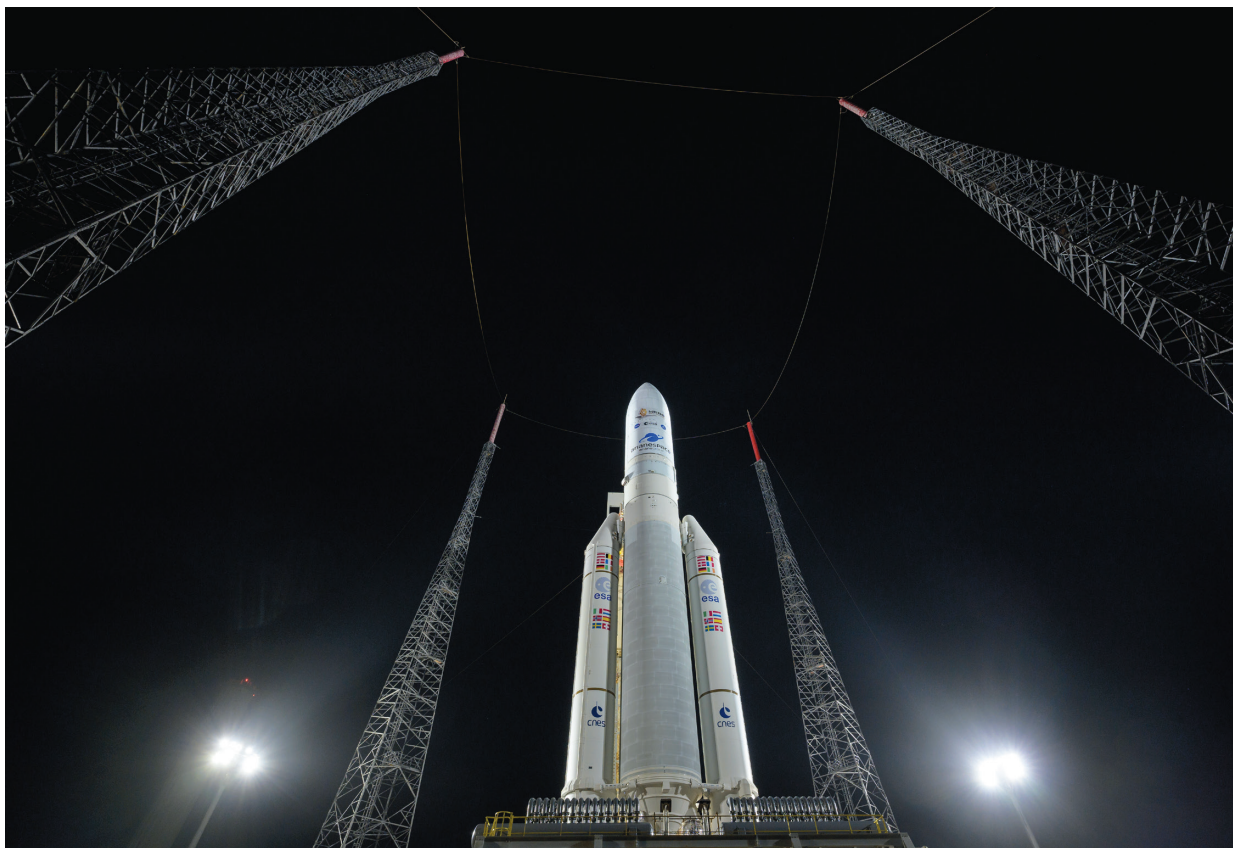
*Understanding
Juneteenth*

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to patient*



A stellar Christmas present: The James Webb Space Telescope began its million-mile journey on December 25, 2021.

ASTRONOMY

Enlightened

Kenneth Sembach, AB'88, leads the mission to find the universe's first light.

BY MAUREEN SEARCY

On the morning of December 25, 2021, the James Webb Space Telescope launched from French Guiana—a development decades in the making. The observatory includes 18 hexagonal mirror segments, a sunshield, and four instruments and was folded like origami for liftoff. For a month, Webb unfolded en route to its destination: the second Lagrange Point (L2), a spot where gravity from the sun and Earth work together to keep satellites nearly fixed relative to Earth, as they orbit the sun in sync.

Along Webb's million-mile journey to L2, there were more than 300 stages where a malfunction could have ended the mission—three times more than for a Mars landing. But **Kenneth Sembach**, AB'88, wasn't worried. As director of the Space Telescope Science Institute, the NASA-contracted nonprofit organization responsible for Webb's flight and science operations, Sembach was reassured by the successful launch.

There were some “nerve-racking hours,” he says, like waiting for the sunshield to deploy—a complex process never before attempted in space. But when Sembach spoke with the *Magazine* shortly after Webb reached L2, he thought that the observatory had passed the most worrisome milestones. There could be problems with a subsystem or instrument later, “but we know the observatory is cooling down. The sunshield is doing its job. The telescope is deployed,” he says. “Everything looks good so far.”

Webb, an infrared observatory, will be used to study objects in our own solar system, the universe's expansion, and exoplanets. Sembach is particularly eager to see what Webb was principally designed to find: the first light in the universe. When light travels for billions of years, it stretches out as the universe expands, from ultraviolet and visible light into infrared radiation. To see light from 13.5 billion years ago, when the first stars and galaxies switched on, says Sembach—“How do you top that?”

Sembach's background is in spectroscopy—the study of how matter absorbs or emits light and other types of electromagnetic radiation—and he began that work at the University of Chicago. Alongside research professor **Priscilla Frisch** and **Donald York**, PhD'71, the Horace B. Horton Professor Emeritus in Astronomy and Astrophysics, Sembach studied the structure of the interstellar mat-

NASA/Bill Ingalls

ter in the direction of the constellation Orion. (His interest in stars was sparked in the fifth grade by a Golden Books Nature Guide to constellations, hastily chosen for a book report. He used it to hunt for stars in the Chicago suburbs, and “Boom, I was hooked.”)

“I like the idea that light contains information,” says Sembach. During his College years and as a PhD student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, he used data from ground- and space-based observatories, including the Hubble Space Telescope and the International Ultraviolet Explorer. “The fact that you can derive chemical composition and velocity and amount of material and distribution of different

elements—just from looking at spectra—is pretty fascinating.”

Sembach still conducts research, but his leadership responsibilities at the Baltimore-based Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI), where he was named director in 2015, demand much of his time. Before that, he had already spent 14 years working on and eventually leading Hubble’s science program, which the STScI manages in addition to Webb operations.

When Sembach became director, he grew more involved with the Webb mission. The instruments had been built, but all major ground testing and flight operations development lay ahead. The science program—which determines how and why the observatory will be used and by whom—was defined in the past few years, with Sembach as the selection official.

The institute runs an annual competition for time on the telescope. For the initial round, STScI received about 1,200 proposals, but only a couple of hundred were approved after peer review. “You can do whatever you want with the observatory,” says Sembach, “but you’ve got to convince somebody it’s a good idea.”

Before Webb takes its first official glimpses into the universe, the primary mirror segments must be aligned, the instruments activated, and everything calibrated. (Sembach is also re-

sponsible for declaring Webb ready for prime time.) The early release observations are slated for July. He knows what those first science images will be, but he can’t say. We’ll have to wait like everyone else. He does not yet know what color palette scientists will use to render invisible-to-humans infrared light into something we can see. But “you know a Hubble image when you see it,” he says, “and I think the same will be true for Webb.”

The James Webb Space Telescope is often called Hubble’s successor, but Sembach expects at least five more years from Hubble. Webb should be operational for at least a decade, with enough fuel on board to keep the observatory in orbit for 20 years. “Having both Hubble and Webb working together,” says Sembach, “is going to be spectacular.” And in a few years, the Roman Space Telescope—named for “mother of Hubble” Nancy Grace Roman, PhD’49—will join Webb at L2.

Roman, an infrared observatory that repurposes a 2.4-meter mirror from a spy satellite, is the binocular complement to Webb’s telescope. Webb looks deep into space, with a narrow field of view. Roman won’t see as far but will cover an enormous region of sky. Imagine a Hubble image, only a hundred times bigger—which is, Sembach says in his understated way, “kind of cool.” ♦



Kenneth Sembach, AB’88.

VIROLOGY

CBD vs. COVID-19

QUICK STUDY

In addition to vaccines, COVID-19 treatments are vital to managing the pandemic. A study published February 23 in *Science Advances* presents evidence that cannabidiol (CBD) can inhibit SARS-CoV-2 infection. Researchers including **Marsha Rosner**, the Charles B. Huggins Professor in the Ben May Department of Cancer Research, treated human lung cells with CBD before exposing them to SARS-CoV-2. They found that with higher concentrations of CBD, the virus could enter the cells but replication was suppressed. The team also treated mice with CBD for a week prior to infection and found less virus in their noses and lungs. In a parallel analysis, the researchers found that patients with epilepsy who took medical CBD—of far higher purity and concentration than most commercially available products—tested positive for COVID-19 at substantially lower rates, further supporting the case for human clinical trials.—*M. S.* ♦

HISTORY

Understanding Juneteenth

A historian sheds light on the document behind the newest federal holiday.

BY MARY ABOWD

Forty years ago, **Edward T. Cotham Jr.**, AM'76, began leading walking tours through historic Galveston, Texas. Each time he'd stop groups at the spot where the famous "Juneteenth order" was issued, he'd get quizzical looks. "June what?" people would ask.

Then a budding Civil War historian (who has since authored several books on Texas military history), Cotham was astounded by how few knew anything about that landmark day—June 19, 1865—when Union troops came ashore at Galveston Bay and freed the last major group of enslaved people in Confederate territory.

Though the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed two-and-a-half years earlier, freeing enslaved people in the "States and parts of States ... in rebellion," it wasn't until Juneteenth that this promise was realized by military order. This was a day of independence celebrated by African Americans from the start, one just as important as the Fourth of July. Largely unnoticed outside of Black communities until this century, annual Juneteenth celebrations spread from Texas, where it officially became a state holiday in 1980, throughout the United States. The holiday has been hailed by some as the oldest continuous commemoration of emancipation in America, marked for more than 150 years by parades, pageants, and picnics.

"I thought, 'Someday someone needs to write a scholarly book about the history behind this event,'" says Cotham, who is chief investment officer and emeritus board member at the Terry

Foundation, the largest private scholarship provider in Texas, alongside his authorship of historical works. Four decades and much painstaking archival research later, his *Juneteenth: The Story Behind the Celebration* (Texas A&M Press, 2021) landed last summer, just weeks before President Joe Biden declared June 19 a federal holiday (Cotham swears the timing was sheer luck).

Much of Cotham's research centers around the document at the heart of the holiday—the understatedly titled "General Orders No. 3," embraced by formerly enslaved people as their "freedom paper." Although penned in elegant cursive, the order's four sentences were strung together in a way that baffled him. Its first line contained a rousing nod to the Emancipation Proclamation: "The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, 'all slaves are free,'" it declared. Yet that liberatory language was sharply contradicted in the last two lines, which admonish the newly emancipated to

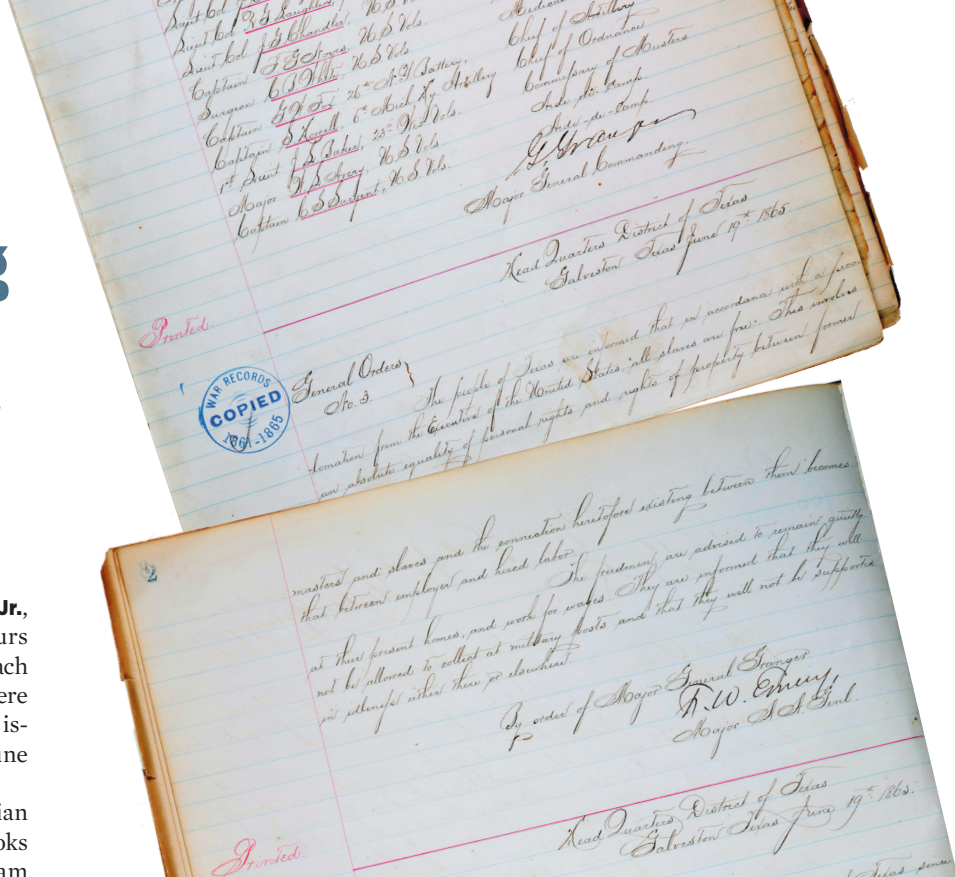
stay put "quietly" and keep working for their former masters as hired laborers.

"That was always the great puzzle to me, how it came to be that we celebrated and gave parades for this order that had two almost conflicting themes," Cotham says. "The first sentence says you're free, the last two sentences say you're free to stay where you are."

The puzzle didn't end there. The document's second sentence calls for "an absolute equality of personal rights" between former masters and those they had enslaved. "That's in many ways the most elaborate and beautiful language in the whole document," Cotham says. But it was not the stuff of military orders.

Finding out who authored it was Cotham's most surprising discovery. A staff officer named F. W. Emery had been tapped by Union Army top brass to sign and administer the order on behalf of his superior, Major General Gordon Granger (whom Army leadership disliked and mistrusted). The 29-year-old editor of a crusading antislavery newspaper, Emery had fought alongside John

General Orders No. 3 concretized the promises of the Emancipation Proclamation.



QUICK STUDY

BIOLOGY

The ears have it

All bats—about 1,440 species, most of which use echolocation—belong to one of two genetic lineages: *Yinpterochiroptera* (Yin) and *Yangochiroptera* (Yang). Scientists have speculated that the branches use echolocation in different ways, and in the February 17 issue of *Nature*, UChicago biologist **Zhe-Xi Luo** and lead author **Benjamin Sulser**, SB'16, present anatomical evidence that Yin and Yang bats do “see” the world differently. Using CT scans, the team discovered that Yin and Yang bats have distinct architecture of the inner ear, where nerve cells carry sound to the brain. In Yin bats, as in most other mammals, nerves run through a bony canal, which is porous like a coffee filter. That canal in Yang bats, if not completely absent, has larger holes, like a colander. This more flexible configuration may drive evolution, explaining Yang diversity in behavior, habitat, and diet—and why roughly 80 percent of bats that echolocate are Yang bats.—*M. S.* ♦

Brown Jr., son of the martyred abolitionist. The young idealist took the opportunity to make his mark, and Cotham says he is “100 percent convinced” Emery wrote that line and slipped it into the order. “He just happened to be on the scene to write that order in a way that would last through the ages and in a very specific way define freedom.”

That revelation clarified some details about the way Juneteenth has been popularly understood. Because Granger’s name appears on the Juneteenth order, he has been incorrectly portrayed as a champion of abolition who not only authored the document but read it from a balcony to the surprise and awe of his enslaved listeners. Cotham contends that none of that is true. Granger had a questionable record when it came to the enslaved population, probably knew little about the order’s content, and would not have been pegged as a civil rights icon by those who knew him.

In addition, the order was not read as a public address but rather disseminated on handbills and reported widely in Texas newspapers. It was read to enslaved people by their former masters, however. In archival interviews from the 1920s and ’30s, many formerly enslaved people remembered that they were told, “You are as free as I am,” a

sort of translation of Emery’s words. That repetition took Cotham aback. “I said, my goodness, this is an echo of 150-year-old language that was read to [them] that they remembered all the rest of their lives.”

But Cotham points out, interestingly, that not all enslaved people were shocked by General Orders No. 3. “We have evidence that there was this very informal network of communication between enslaved people all over the South and certainly through Texas,” he says. Some formerly enslaved people even reported knowing about the Emancipation Proclamation before their masters did. As a result, Cotham says, “they were not surprised by emancipation and expected it to come.”

With Juneteenth finally recognized by the US government—156 years after African Americans first claimed it as their Freedom Day—Cotham hopes that important truths about it will emerge. The order likely resulted in immediate freedom for more people than any other document issued during the Civil War, but as he reminds us in *Juneteenth*, the liberation of enslaved African Americans didn’t happen simply through documents or speeches “but because of their own struggles and the struggles of people who fought to free them.” ♦

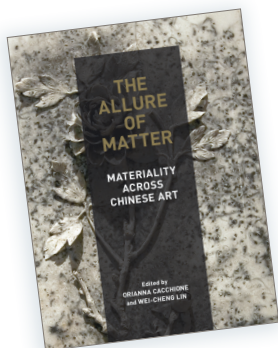


A band performs at an Austin, Texas, Juneteenth celebration in 1900.

RESEARCH

Fresh ink

A selection of recent books by UChicago faculty members.

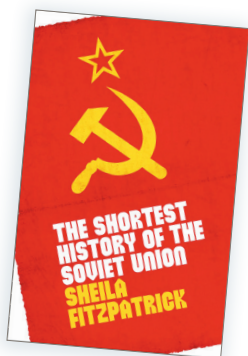


The Allure of Matter: Materiality Across Chinese Art

University of Chicago Press

Edited by **Orianna Cacchione**
Curator of the Smart Museum of Art and **Wei-Cheng Lin**
Associate Professor of Art History

The 2020 Smart Museum of Art exhibition *The Allure of Matter: Material Art from China* showcased contemporary Chinese artists who use unconventional materials in their work: human hair, cigarettes, and plastic, for instance. This collection of 10 essays builds on the show, demonstrating that an innovative approach to materials can be traced back all the way to ancient China. In this tradition, the contributors suggest, artists are apt both to depart from the usual artistic materials and to employ them in unexpected ways.—*L. D.*

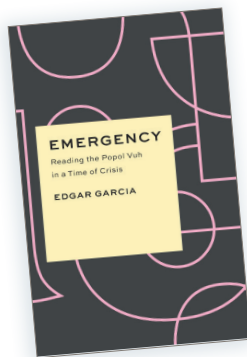


The Shortest History of the Soviet Union

Columbia University Press

By **Sheila Fitzpatrick**
Bernadotte E. Schmitt
Distinguished Service
Professor Emerita of Russian
History and the College

For **Sheila Fitzpatrick**, a founder of the field of Soviet history, the story of the Soviet Union stacks irony on top of irony. Lasting slightly longer than the average life expectancy of a Soviet citizen born in 1991, the state—so committed to science and planning—can be said to have begun and ended by historical accident. In *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Fitzpatrick crystallizes a career's worth of knowledge into a brisk 256-page read that makes good on the promise of the witty title. Her book arrives at a time when greater understanding of the Soviet Union and what it left behind is especially welcome.—*L. D.*

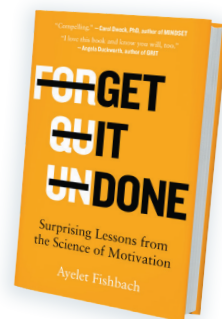


Emergency: Reading the Popol Vuh in a Time of Crisis

University of Chicago Press

By **Edgar Garcia**
Associate Professor of English
Language and Literature

The Popol Vuh, the oral creation story of the Mayan K'iche' people, dates back to at least 300 BCE. The earliest known written version (now lost), believed to have been penned in the mid-1550s, was transcribed in 1702—amid an era of conversion and colonial distress for the people of Guatemala. **Edgar Garcia** wrote the essays that comprise *Emergency* in Chicago during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown, a time of global turmoil well suited to reflection on the social, cultural, and political upheaval surrounding the Popol Vuh's original authors in their own day. In essays such as "Television," "Demons," and "The Sun," Garcia explores two moments of disarray, centuries apart but not unconnected.—*L. D.*



Get It Done: Surprising Lessons from the Science of Motivation

Hachette Book Group

By **Ayelet Fishbach**
Jeffrey Breakenridge Keller
Professor of Behavioral
Science and Marketing and IBM
Corporation Faculty Scholar at
Chicago Booth

For many years behavioral science expert **Ayelet Fishbach** has designed experimental studies to derive insights about human motivation. What makes us go forward? What gets in our way? How can we inspire ourselves to stay on track toward the goals we most want to achieve? In *Get It Done* Fishbach draws on her extensive body of research and offers concrete ways to choose the right goals, prioritize them appropriately, and make real progress toward them. More than just a pep talk, the book illuminates the science of motivation with examples from Fishbach's experiments and translates the findings into strategies for everyday life.—*L. D.*

THE END OF AN ERA



In January John W. Boyer, AM'69, PhD'75, announced plans to step down as dean of the College, a position he has held since 1992, and take on a new role as senior advisor to the president after the 2022–23 academic year. Boyer, the author of *The University of Chicago: A History* (University of Chicago Press, 2015), has made plenty of UChicago history himself. During his unprecedented six terms as dean, he has overseen changes that transformed the undergraduate experience at UChicago, including the expansion of College enrollment, a restructuring of the Core curriculum, the construction of new residential commons, and the improvement of career advising and study abroad.

Along the way Boyer has become a campus icon, known for his bike rides around Hyde Park, his mustache, and his uncanny ability to connect the Habsburg Empire to, well, everything. Look no further than the student-organized Dean Boyer Appreciation Day in 2013 (where the photo above was taken) featuring a make-your-own-mustache station and Austrian treats. As one alumna told the *Magazine* at that event, “Dean Boyer is to the University of Chicago as a good mustache is to a face: it completes it, makes it better. He is the mustache of the University of Chicago.”—S. A. ♦

BOYER BY THE NUMBERS

New residential commons
constructed during Boyer's
deanship

4

Faculty-led study abroad
programs in 1998

3

Faculty-led study abroad
programs today

38

UChicago Careers In...
programs added since
UChicago Careers in Business
debuted in 2006

13

Pages in Boyer's history
of the University

704

Typical lifespan, in years, of his
iconic Schwinn bikes

5

Photographs in the campus
archive of Boyer without
a mustache

0



In her writing, nurse Theresa Brown, AB'87, PhD'94, has called attention to challenges facing her profession, including burnout, staff shortages, and low pay—issues that have only grown more severe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEDICINE

Health care from the other side

A literature scholar turned nurse reckons with a new identity: patient.

BY SUSIE ALLEN, AB'09

Theresa Brown, AB'87, PhD'94, had been a nurse for almost a decade when she learned she had breast cancer. She'd even worked in oncology, treating cases far more dire than her small and very treatable tumor. With all that experience, she thought she knew what to expect as a cancer patient.

But, as Brown writes in her new memoir *Healing: When a Nurse Becomes a Patient* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2022), she had no idea what it's really like when the life you are trying to save is your own. "My

sense of what health care was like as a nurse," Brown says, "was just wrong."

There was no one problem, no grievous medical error or cruel remark. Instead, what Brown found was mundane indifference to her suffering. "There was so little kindness, so little compassion, so little organization, so little sense of 'OK, we've got this,' so little good communication," she says.

As a nurse she thought she could fill the gaps in the system by working harder, but as a patient, she saw just how wide and frequent the gaps can be. It's a problem without an easy solution, but she believes nonprofit hospitals and some form of universal health care coverage would allow for better and more humane care.

When Brown was first diagnosed, she assumed someone would sit her down and explain her prognosis and treatment options—"you know, like in a movie or a TV show, when people get a cancer diagnosis. Yeah, that never happened. And I don't know that it actually does."

It was an early sign of troubles to come: throughout her treatment, Brown found herself having to coordinate her own complex treatment

and jockey for attention in an overburdened system. She tried to be the ideal patient—an agreeable and passive vessel for her providers' wisdom—because she knew from experience that easy patients tend to get the best care. But in her fear and exhaustion, she also became an occasional squeaky wheel, taking to Twitter to complain about delayed mammogram results and trying to use personal connections to get an earlier appointment with a medical oncologist.

Healing is by far Brown's most personal book, but it carries forward themes she explores in her first two, *Critical Care: A New Nurse Faces Death, Life, and Everything in Between* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2010) and *The Shift: One Nurse, Twelve Hours, Four Patients' Lives* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2015). In these and in her frequent contributions to the *New York Times*, Brown writes about medicine as a human endeavor prone to human failings: ego, inattention, pettiness. Yet she never loses sight of the potential for good care to heal patients physically and mentally.

Her belief in the power of health care has made her an advocate for all

QUICK STUDY

HEALTH CARE

First, do no harm

The language used in medical charts can expose health care providers' unconscious biases. A study published in the February *Health Affairs* reveals that, even after controlling for socioeconomic factors and health characteristics, Black patients were 2.54 times as likely as White patients to have at least one negative descriptor in their records. A UChicago Medicine team used machine learning to search health records of more than 18,000 adult patients, looking for words such as "noncompliant," "aggressive," "combative," "defensive," and "hysterical." The team used natural language processing techniques to determine when these terms were used in the context of describing patients or their behavior. The study also found higher rates of negative language for people on Medicare or Medicaid and unmarried patients. The terminology health care providers use can exacerbate existing health care disparities; the researchers hope to encourage them to reconsider how they talk—and think—about patients.—M. S. ♦

kinds of improvements to it, both systemic and cultural. In 2009, shortly before the Affordable Care Act was introduced to Congress, Brown wrote an article about one of her leukemia patients, a man in his 60s, who spent the last three months of his life worried about the medical debt he would leave his wife.

"My patient thought he had planned well for his health care needs," she wrote. "He just never thought he would wake up one day with a diagnosis of leukemia. But which of us does? And that's why we need health care reform." That piece earned Brown an invitation to the White House to meet President Barack Obama, who quoted from her article in a speech at a nurses' event supporting health care reform.

She has also highlighted a pervasive culture of bullying that is widely recognized within medicine and persists—Brown recalls early in her career learning the adage "nurses eat their young." The cruelty flows freely: doctors bully nurses and veteran nurses bully junior ones (and even, on occasion, inexperienced doctors).

Brown's decision to air the health care system's dirty laundry hasn't always been popular among her colleagues, but she came to see the constant backstabbing as "a threat to quality care." She remembers a doctor blaming her, unfairly and in front of a patient, for a late test result. The frustration left her distracted for sev-

eral hours—hours in which she could easily have made a mistake that would harm a patient.

Brown's capacity for critical distance from her profession stems, in part, from her first career teaching English at Tufts University and MIT. (In fact, the feminist and post-colonial theory she read at UChicago shaped her perspective on bullying in medicine and helped her navigate environments where "certain people aren't allowed to speak and certain people are allowed to behave badly.") She enjoyed teaching, but always felt like something was missing—a sense, as she describes it, "of rubbing elbows with life."

Her awe at the midwives who treated her during a complicated pregnancy, along with encouragement from a friend, spurred her to consider nursing as a career. After several years of chipping away at science prerequisite courses, she enrolled in an accelerated bachelor of science in nursing program at the University of Pittsburgh. She worked in hospitals as an oncology nurse before switching to home hospice work. And, in a full-circle turn, she began teaching nursing.

COVID-19 brought into stark relief the challenges facing nurses that Brown has long tried to call attention to in her writing. In the first year of the pandemic alone, 1,154 nurses died from COVID-19. Many left the profession, buckling under the strain of treating more patients with fewer resources, only to watch them die. Brown herself took a break from clinical work during the pandemic—she is still taking the chemotherapy drug Tamoxifen, and the risks of frontline work felt too great.

But more and more she finds herself thinking about returning, despite all the challenges nurses continue to face. "I don't miss all the mess and being pulled in five places at once," she says. Still, "I do really miss it. I do." ♦



Theresa Brown, AB'87, PhD'94.

Photography by Heather Kresge



READ AN EXCERPT FROM *HEALING AT*
MAG.UCHICAGO.EDU/HEALING.

For the record

RUBENSTEIN ELECTED BOARD CHAIR

The University's Board of Trustees has elected **David M. Rubenstein**, JD'73, as its next chair. Rubenstein will begin his three-year term after the board's annual meeting. He succeeds **Joseph Neubauer**, MBA'65, who has served as chair since 2015. Rubenstein, the co-founder and co-chairman of the global investment firm The Carlyle Group, joined the board in 2007. Since 2010 he has committed \$61 million to the Rubenstein Scholars Program, which provides full-tuition scholarships for about 10 percent of students at the Law School. The David Rubenstein Forum, which opened in September 2020, is named in his honor.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

As part of a comprehensive effort to support students and scholars impacted by the war in Ukraine, the University announced plans to give full-tuition scholarships to undergraduates affected by the invasion—and to provide expanded college readiness programming for Ukraine's high school students. UChicago is also working with the national organization Scholars at Risk to place individual scholars and scientists from Ukraine in departments and laboratories at the University.

SCHOLARLY FRONTIERS

In February the Council of the University Senate approved the creation of the Department of Race, Diaspora, and Indigeneity (RDI). The new interdisciplinary department will be a home for ambitious scholarship on how these concepts helped shape the modern world and reverberate in contemporary thought, culture, and policy. RDI, which will sit in the Division of the Social Sciences, emerged from a faculty-driven process that began in autumn 2020. The department will immediately begin its undergraduate program. Opportunities for graduate study will follow.

SCIENTISTS ON THE RISE

Five UChicago assistant professors have earned Sloan Research Fellowships, which recognize early-career scholars' potential to make substantial contributions to their fields: **Peter Ganong**, an economist at

the Harris School of Public Policy, who examines the effects of public policies on people facing financial difficulties; **Chao Gao**, a scholar of nonparametric and high-dimensional statistics, network analysis, Bayes theory, and robust statistics; chemist **Mark Levin**, who develops synthetic methods, reagents, and catalytic principles that enable precision synthesis; computer scientist **Pedro Lopes**, who focuses on integrating computer interfaces with the human body; and psychologist **Monica Rosenberg**, who studies the neuroscience of attention.

FINANCIAL ASSET

MaryFrances McCourt became the University's chief financial officer on April 18. In this role, McCourt will work with leaders at the University and UChicago Medicine to manage and strengthen the University's business, financial, and administrative strategies. Most recently McCourt served as senior vice president for finance and treasurer at the University of Pennsylvania. Before joining Penn in 2016, she was senior vice president and chief financial officer at Indiana University.



NEW UCPD CHIEF

On April 4 **Kyle Bowman** became chief of police for the University of Chicago Police Department. As chief Bowman leads the nationally accredited law enforcement agency that serves the University, UChicago Medicine, and neighboring communities. Bowman was previously a lieutenant colonel with the Michigan State Police as well as deputy director and commander of its Field Operations Bureau, where he oversaw all field posts, established directives and priorities for the bureau, and led several task forces.



RYERSON LECTURER

Cathy J. Cohen, the David and Mary Winton Green Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science, will deliver the 2022 Nora and Edward Ryerson Lecture on May 3 at the Rubenstein Forum. Cohen is the principal investigator of the Black Youth Project and the GenForward Survey. Her work reveals that many of the most pressing issues facing the country—including public education, gun violence, mass incarceration, and immigration—disproportionately affect Black and Latino youth. Her Ryerson Lecture is titled "Democratic Futures? Race, Resistance and Political Vulnerability."



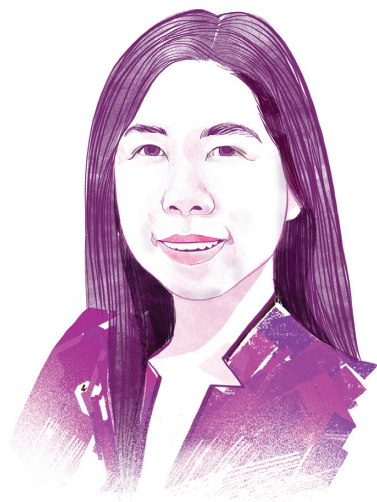
EXPANDING CANCER CARE

UChicago Medicine has announced plans to build a \$633 million 500,000-square-foot facility dedicated to cancer care on its medical campus—the city's first freestanding clinical cancer center. The 128-bed center, which includes inpatient and outpatient care, will focus on prevention and early detection of cancer and be a hub for research into the more aggressive forms of cancer that disproportionately affect residents of the South Side and many other communities of color across the country. The new center is expected to open to patients in 2026.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Five members of the UChicago community received Diversity Leadership Awards in recognition of their work to advance justice and equality: College fourth-year and Organization of Black Students board member **Dinah Clottey**; staff member **Cynthia Cook-Conley**, who was recognized for creating a supportive and inclusive community for students; alumna **Grace Chan McKibben**, AB'90, AM'90, executive director of the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community; **Doriane C. Miller**, MD'83, a professor of medicine who studies health disparities; and **Radhika Santhanagopalan**, a PhD student in psychology and at Chicago Booth, who organized the inaugural UC Juneteenth Initiative.

Clockwise from upper right: photography by Irving Vazquez; photograph by Candace Di Carlo; UChicago News



INTERVIEW

TikTok doc

Surgeon Karen Tang, AB'00, meets patients where they are: online.

BY SUSIE ALLEN, AB'09

By day, **Karen Tang**, AB'00, is a minimally invasive gynecologic surgeon. By night, she's the fearless @karentangmd on TikTok. Since she created the account in 2020, Tang's informative, funny, and nonjudgmental videos on topics including menstruation, sexual health, and transgender rights have been viewed millions of times. Her comments have been edited and condensed.

What inspired you to get on TikTok?

A couple years back at a conference, one of my friends said something that changed the trajectory of my life. She said we have to get on social media, because that's how people find health information now. As doctors, we are almost obligated to understand how people are consuming health information and meet them where they are.

You post a lot about endometriosis—why?

I see a lot of endometriosis patients in my practice. It is very common—some-

thing like one in 10 people assigned female at birth have endometriosis at some point. But it takes on average seven years from when someone starts having symptoms to when they're diagnosed. And there are many reasons for that. One is that the symptoms are a little bit embarrassing—you know, painful sex, painful periods, irregular bleeding, bowel symptoms. Things that people may not feel comfortable sharing even with their doctors. Sometimes patients are told these symptoms are normal.

Conditions like endometriosis, adenomyosis, pelvic floor muscle issues are what I call “hidden conditions,” because they are hard to diagnose unless you know what you're looking for. For all those reasons, people will go years and years with debilitating pain and horrible suffering. People are really hungry for information.

Another theme of your TikToks is your experience as a woman in surgery.

I am excited to show that you can be a woman in surgery and also have kids

and a happy home life. I struggled with deciding to do residency in OB-GYN, because I had heard the hours were terrible and it would be hard to balance children with such a difficult schedule. What I didn't realize back then is that there are so many different ways to construct your career. I wanted to show that you can do it, that it's fun, and that it's not all stress and worry.

One of your specialties is providing gender-affirming care to transgender patients. What got you interested in that work?

I started caring for transgender patients back in residency. One of our faculty members was doing hysterectomies for transgender men. It wasn't a formal part of the medical school or residency experience—I just learned from someone who was already doing it. Now there's definitely more formal teaching at the residency level. But people of my generation, we were just learning as we went and trying to do right by patients.

So much of gender-affirming care has to do with listening to the patient and being respectful of them and their individuality. No two patients are going to have the same perspective or goals. When I started my own private practice, I made sure that my intake forms asked about people's pronouns and gender identity and included very open-ended questions about sexual partners, fertility, contraception.

You had a fun post about playing music during surgery. What are you listening to these days?

I usually choose a Pandora station. It used to always be '80s dance music. I recently have gone through a BTS phase. I joke that I had two midlife crises during the pandemic—one was TikTok and the other was BTS. More recently, I've come back to the Backstreet Boys. ♦



READ MORE AT MAG.UCHICAGO.EDU/TIKTOKDOC.

LEGACY

A WRITER, LOST AND FOUND

Nearly a century after it was banned, Gertrude Beasley's (AM 1918) memoir of her Texas upbringing reaches a new generation of readers.

BY SUSIE ALLEN, AB'09



In 1928 a young writer named Gertrude Beasley sailed from London to New York and was never heard from again. She left behind only one book, *My First Thirty Years* (Contact Editions, 1925). Beasley's memoir of her often-abusive Texas childhood earned praise from the era's literati—H. L. Mencken called it “sharp and tremendously effective”—but it also attracted powerful enemies. The book was banned in Britain, destroyed by US Customs, and hunted down by the Texas Rangers.

Still, the few copies that survived were enough to keep Beasley's (AM 1918) literary legacy alive. Among Texas writers in the know, her name circulated long after she disappeared from the public eye. Larry McMurtry, the author of another Texas classic, *Lonesome Dove* (Simon and Schuster, 1985), spearheaded a 1989 limited-edition reissue of *My First Thirty Years*; literary critic Don Graham excerpted the memoir's first

several pages in *Lone Star Literature: A Texas Anthology* (W. W. Norton, 2003).

Beasley stood out for the strength of her writing and for her personal tenacity. Born into poverty, she made a new life for herself through education—and risked everything she'd worked for to tell the truth about her experiences in print.

For all its merit, *My First Thirty Years* was, until very recently, a difficult book to find. The 1925 first edition sells for hundreds of dollars, and only 500 copies of the 1989 reissue were published. **Nina Bennett**, AB'07, a Dallas-based independent scholar, ran into this problem after reading Beasley's excerpt in *Lone Star Literature*. The small taste of *My First Thirty Years* she encountered (“It just makes your hair stand on end,” she says) left her searching for more. She eventually tracked down a 1989 copy, but the fact that it was so hard to find, that “a voice that captures this complexity and fierceness was banned, was silenced—I just couldn't get over it.”

She found an ally in her mother-in-law, Dominique Raccach, the publisher of Sourcebooks, who agreed to reissue *My First Thirty Years*. The new edition, released this past fall during Banned Books Week, includes a foreword by Bennett. The daunting task of editing fell to Nina's sister-in-law **Marie Bennett**, CER'16, who cleaned up the manuscript, confirming spellings and definitions of long-gone Texas slang and introducing section breaks into Beasley's mostly unbroken narrative.

The rereleased edition was greeted with a wave of enthusiastic press—a reception Beasley never got to enjoy in her lifetime. Indeed, even before *My First Thirty Years* was initially published, Beasley knew her book had a target on its back. When her publisher, Paris-based Contact Editions, attempted to mail the page proofs to Beasley in England, the package was intercepted by Scotland Yard, which threatened to prosecute Beasley for distributing obscene materials. In her home country, the Comstock Act of

Photo: US Department of State/courtesy Sourcebooks/adapted by Guido Mendez

1873 made it illegal to possess or disseminate “immoral” publications, putting her at risk there too. That she went forward with the publication despite these dangers is a testament to her courage and to how much she must have believed in her own work.

Beasley’s would-be censors were correct in pointing out that the book contained discussions of sex and sexuality, but as Mencken put it, “only a Comstock, reading it, would mistake it for an attempt at pornography.” *My First Thirty Years* describes, in viscerally upsetting detail, subjects such as marital rape, child sexual abuse, and bestiality.

But it was what happened. Beasley’s early years were a catalog of horrors—her father physically abused her mother and brothers, her brothers sexually abused her, and her mother, worn down by 13 children, could do little to intervene. The family’s circumstances improved slightly when Beasley’s parents divorced, though poverty remained the defining force in their lives. Beasley, as the book’s second half relates, found an escape in her schooling, eventually earning a master’s degree in education from the University and starting a career in journalism.

What saves the book from being unrelentingly grim is the keenness of Beasley’s observations. She relates her traumas frankly and arrestingly and makes no apologies for feeling fury at the circumstances of her upbringing, writing, “I shall protest against having been brought into the world without any heritage—mental, moral, or physical—to my dying day.” While the book in many ways traces a redemptive arc, Beasley resists tidy conclusions and fairy-tale endings. She finishes *My First Thirty Years* “as happy as a person of my temperament is capable of being” but longing for a romantic love she never found.

Her book also stands as a fascinating

historical artifact: Beasley recounts getting an invitation to visit social worker Jane Addams at Hull House and attending lectures by socialist activist Emma Goldman and birth control advocate Margaret Sanger, who had “a beautiful voice and manner, and discussed her subject in a scientific way.” Having witnessed her mother experience one unwanted pregnancy after another, Beasley embraced Sanger’s message and later wrote for her publication *Birth Control Review*.

My First Thirty Years clearly reached some readers—enough to be reviewed

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in publications including the *New Yorker* and the *American Mercury*—but most US-bound copies were seized and destroyed by Customs. The copies that managed to reach Texas were snatched up by law enforcement with particular urgency, Bennett writes in her foreword—not only because of the graphic material, but because of an offhand mention of the governor’s mother-in-law having an affair with a Baptist preacher at Beasley’s childhood church.

Before long Scotland Yard made good on its threats to Beasley: in 1927 she was

arrested and spent the next year in the psychiatric ward of a London hospital. The British authorities agreed to release her only if she left the country.

During the voyage to New York she wrote a letter to the US State Department, claiming she was being persecuted and her career destroyed. Was it an accurate account of the censorship she was facing or proof she was unwell? It may have been some of both. Whatever it signified, that letter is the last word from Gertrude Beasley.

The 1989 edition of *My First Thirty Years* revitalized the mystery of Beasley’s disappearance, but it was not solved until 2008. A librarian at Beasley’s alma mater, Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas (called Simmons College in Beasley’s day), discovered via census records that Beasley had been committed to Central Islip Psychiatric Institution on Long Island soon after arriving in New York. She remained there until her death in 1955 from pancreatic cancer.

Bennett finds it hard to ignore the irony of *My First Thirty Years*, which made Beasley and then undid her. “It’s a profound tragedy,” Bennett reflects. “This book is both her peak life achievement and the cause of her downfall.” Beasley’s commitment to honesty, especially about women’s experiences, came at a terrible price. The British philosopher Bertrand Russell was prescient when he described her writing as “truthful, which is illegal.”

On the book’s first page, Beasley writes, with characteristic starkness, “It is perfectly clear to me that life is not worth living, but it is also equally clear that life is worth talking about.” It’s hard not to wonder what else, given more time, she might have said. ♦



TO READ AN EXCERPT FROM
MY FIRST THIRTY YEARS, VISIT
MAG.UCHICAGO.EDU/BEASLEY.



PROFILE

FAMILY DOCTOR

Trained as a cochlear implant surgeon, Dana Suskind has taken on a new role as an advocate for American parents.

BY SUSIE ALLEN, AB'09

Dana Suskind has performed hundreds of cochlear implant surgeries during her medical career, but there's another number for which she's much better known. "The title of my first book, *Thirty Million Words*, is going to be my epitaph, I'm sure," says Suskind, a professor of surgery and pediatrics at UChicago Medicine.

According to an influential study by two University of Kansas researchers, children from the lowest-income households hear thirty million fewer words by the time they turn four than children in the highest-income households. In recent years the exact size of the early language gap has been widely

debated (more on that later), but whatever the figure, Suskind wants to bring it closer to zero.

In her 2015 book, *Thirty Million Words: Building a Child's Brain—Tune In, Talk More, Take Turns* (Dutton), Suskind promoted a simple way for parents to improve children's chances in life: conversation. Talking more with babies and toddlers is, in her view, the single most important thing parents can do to promote cognitive development. She devised an easy shorthand for how parents and other caregivers should engage with young children: the 3Ts. They should tune in (that is, notice what interests their children), talk more (narrate everyday activities using rich vocabulary), and take turns (treat the child as a conversation partner).

It made for an appealing argument, the kind of tidy solution that policy makers and media outlets like. Beginning in the 2010s, and especially after the release of her book, Suskind became a spokesperson for speech, giving frequent interviews and lectures about the 3Ts. At the same time, the research center she cofounded, the TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health, was developing and testing new interventions to promote early language development.

But as the years went on, Suskind began to see that her tidy solution was less tidy than she had hoped. “I had thought the answers lay in the actions and beliefs of individual parents, in their knowledge and behavior,” Suskind writes in her new book, *Parent Nation: Unlocking Every Child’s Potential, Fulfilling Society’s Promise* (Dutton, 2022). Conducting more research with parents in Chicago made clear that individual knowledge and behavior were not enough to surmount the obstacles many families faced. How do you tune in when you live in a homeless shelter? How do

**PARENTS WERE
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AND AGAIN.”**

you talk more when you are incarcerated?

Parents were doing their best, but “real life would intrude, again and again and again,” Suskind writes. “The larger realities of a family’s circumstances—their work constraints, economic stresses, and mental health as well as the injustices and bad luck they are subject to—all matter as much as the 3Ts for healthy brain development.” Those circumstances, she argues, stem from a systemic failure to support all parents (but especially low-income parents) in the developmentally crucial early years of their children’s lives. This, too, is a gap that needs closing.

Suskind never intended to write a second book. “I thought I was one and done,” she says. But seeing

how her first book connected to a “larger reckoning that we’re having at this moment in time, that context matters and that structure matters—it just compelled me.” She still believes in the power of tuning in, talking more, and taking turns. The bigger challenge is creating a world where all parents can more easily do those three essential things.

Suskind’s big ambitions grew from something small: the cochlea, a tiny snail-shell-shaped organ in the inner ear that helps transmit auditory information to the brain for processing. A malfunctioning cochlea, whether from injury or genetics, can result in severe or profound hearing loss.

During her surgical fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis, Suskind met Rodney Lusk, a pioneer in performing cochlear implant surgeries for children. The small devices include electrodes that are placed in the cochlea and used to stimulate the auditory nerve, giving patients access to sound and spoken language. For children with certain kinds of deafness, cochlear implant surgery—especially in the first year of life, when the brain is most capable of learning how to process sound—can have a transformational effect.

Cochlear implants are divisive within the Deaf community, which views deafness not as a disability but as a culture with its own rich language and distinctive way of life. Some believe it is unethical for parents—particularly hearing parents—to make such a momentous decision on their deaf child’s behalf, saying it deprives children of the opportunity to learn sign language and connect with Deaf culture.

Suskind is quick to point out that she is a proponent of children learning sign language, which she regards as equal to spoken language in every sense: “Language is language is language,” she says. Among her deaf patients born to deaf parents fluent in American Sign Language, many grow up bilingual, both signing and speaking. But for the 90 percent of deaf children born to hearing parents who aren’t fluent signers, she believes that providing access to sound offers the best chance of developing strong language skills.

As Suskind’s surgical career progressed, she began to notice that her patients growing up in



In her first book, Suskind highlighted the importance of brain-building interaction in a child's first three years. In her second, she argues for bigger-picture changes that will help families thrive.

hearing households had uneven outcomes when it came to those language skills. In an ideal scenario, a child who receives a cochlear implant early in life can pick up spoken language the same way a hearing child would: by listening to it, discerning its meaning, and eventually repeating it. This happened for some of her patients, who in time developed language skills on par with their peers. But others faltered.

Why, Suskind wondered, could two children in hearing households who received cochlear implants at the same age fare so differently? Something was missing, and Suskind viewed it as a professional duty and an extension of her Hippocratic Oath to understand what it was. “For me,” she says, “doing right by my patient couldn’t end in the operating room.”

In search of the answer to this mystery, she enrolled in a self-directed course in early childhood development. Suskind found mentors in “the Susans”: **Susan Goldin-Meadow**, the Beardsley Ruml Distinguished Service Professor in Psychology and the Committee on Human Development, and **Susan C. Levine**, the Rebecca Anne Boylan Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology.

Levine was surprised to be sought out by a colleague from across Ellis Avenue—and a surgeon, no less. “I think most people get into a groove with their career, and don’t branch out in that way,” she says. She was more than happy to share what she knew.

One of Levine’s specialties is language development in the aftermath of childhood brain injury. Her research has shown that environmental factors (that is, family support, education, access to specialized therapy) have an underappreciated role in outcomes for these patients. Injury, even serious injury, can be overcome under the right circumstances.

Why can children thrive despite serious brain damage? It’s the same reason cochlear implant

surgery works better in younger children than older ones: neuroplasticity, which is the ability of the brain to form and reorganize connections in response to the environment.

Unlike our other vital organs, our brains are relatively unformed at birth. Roughly 80 percent of brain development occurs from ages zero to three.

During this window, the brain is uniquely capable of adapting to circumstance. If the left hemisphere is damaged, the right can take over its usual functions; if a congenitally deaf child gets a cochlear implant, the brain can learn to interpret sound.

That’s the good news. The bad news is that this window begins to close after age three. Neural connections left unformed at this time may never develop. No other period in a child’s life holds such power and such peril.

Suskind was auditing Goldin-Meadow’s Introduction to Child Development course when she first heard about the 30-million-word study. Like nothing else she’d encountered, it helped explain the uneven outcomes she saw in her cochlear implant patients. For those who struggled to develop language skills after surgery, the “something missing,” Suskind realized, was caregiver conversation.

The study’s authors, Betty Hart and Todd Risley, observed 42 families—13 of high socioeconomic status (SES), 10 of middle SES, 13 of lower SES, and six on public assistance—once a month for an hour from the ages of about seven months to three years.

They found that not only did the children vary in how much language they heard at home, but they also heard different kinds of language. Low SES children heard more prohibitions (“Stop it!”) than affirmations (“Good job!”) in addition to less chitchat. Hart and Risley argued that this difference in quantity and kind of early language exposure contributed to the academic achievement gap between high and low SES children later in life.

Hart and Risley’s study is not airtight. Forty-two families is an awfully small number from which to draw sweeping conclusions, and the research was conducted 40 years ago. The finding of a 30-million-word gap has not been replicated—a more recent



Suskind performed cochlear implant surgery on 10-month-old Dennis Hill in 2019, nine years after operating on his father, Michael. She believes access to language—whether signed or spoken—is crucial for brain development.

study put the number closer to four million. Some scholars object to Hart and Risley's use of White professional families as the implicit standard for the "correct" level of language exposure.

Suskind acknowledges these shortcomings. (In 2019 she changed the name of her research center from Thirty Million Words to the TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health.) Yet she also feels that Hart and Risley started an important conversation about the influence of caregiver interactions on children's later outcomes. It, along with lots of other research in child development, suggested that her implant patients' diverging outcomes and the socioeconomic achievement gap had the same origin story—a lack of sufficiently rich language exposure before age three. This discovery spurred Suskind to action.

Why weren't parents talking? Over time, Suskind and her colleagues identified two major explanations. The first was a lack of awareness: as compared to high SES parents, low SES parents knew less about the importance of parent-child conversation for cognitive development. The second was more practical: parents didn't always know what brain-building interaction looked like in action.

The TMW Center has devised programs to address both obstacles. They've created short videos in both English and Spanish about early brain development that they and partners show at pediatrician visits. And their signature program, from which the 3Ts emerged, involves 12 home visits over six months, during which TMW staff provide caregivers with information about and strategies for promoting cognitive development. A 2018 paper found that the program successfully increased parent knowledge, child language exposure, and conversational turn taking.

But the interventions weren't a magic wand. The home visiting program gave TMW staff an intimate feel for the challenges families face. In *Parent Nation* Suskind writes about one mother,

Sabrina, who lost her job after taking time off work to care for her diabetic husband. The family was evicted from their apartment and spent the next two years in a homeless shelter.

During her TMW visits, Sabrina learned that she should keep a calm tone and avoid issuing too many directives when talking to her two-year-old son. But the shelter was a stressful and sometimes dangerous place for a young child. Yelling might not have been ideal for his growing brain, but it kept him safe. What, Sabrina wanted to know, should she do instead? Suskind is the first to admit she has no good answer to this question.

**I'M A SOCIAL ACTIVIST;
THIS IS NOT JUST
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VIEW FAMILIES AND
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Suskind's attentiveness to families facing adversity comes from both professional experience and personal tragedy. In 2012 her husband, Don Liu, a pediatric surgeon at the University, died rescuing two drowning boys in Lake Michigan. All at once, Suskind was a single parent to three grieving children. In the aftermath of this cataclysm, family and friends formed a protective cocoon around them, but Suskind recognizes that in other circumstances—with less financial stability or less social support—things might have spun out of control.

That Liu died saving the lives of children will never compensate for the loss, but it offers some-

thing to hold on to. “He is still with me every day,” Suskind says. The love he gave to his own children, and the patients he cared for, is a model she tries to follow: “I know we can do that for all children.”

From the beginning of her work on child language development, Suskind made a point of emphasizing the need for bigger changes. “I’m a social activist; this is not just about ‘go talk to your kids,’” she told *Chicago* magazine in 2015. “It’s about fundamentally changing how we view families and their innate power.” But that message didn’t always come through as clearly as she wanted.

Parent Nation is her way of reiterating the point, a “once again for the people in the back” in book form. It argues that the United States has made child-rearing unacceptably hard during the years that matter most for brain development—and that things don’t have to be this way.

American public policy around child development, she contends, is a victim of “the streetlight effect”—a tendency to look for answers in the places where they are easiest to find. She thinks that explains why money, energy, and focus go toward the K–12 education system, even though we know ages zero to three arguably matter more: because the K–12 system exists.

But there’s no reason the United States couldn’t build a high-quality childcare system for infants and toddlers, one informed by the latest research about cognitive development. In fact, one federal agency has already created such a system: the Department of Defense.

In the 1980s the US military began to see its lackluster on-base childcare offerings as a serious readiness issue. To recruit and retain the best soldiers, they needed to build better day cares. So they upped their pay for childcare workers, introduced age-appropriate curricula, and offered a sliding-scale fee structure for families. A 2013 report by the nonprofit organization Child Care Aware cited it as a rare example of high-quality, affordable care in the United States.

“People say, ‘Can it ever change? Will it ever change?’” Suskind says. “The military story is the story of real, dramatic change in the childcare system, in our own backyard, that was done by the federal government.”

Advocating for these kinds of structural improvements is a collective endeavor, and one that will require parents to see each other as allies rather than competitors. A high-inequality society can create a zero-sum sense of success: if your child succeeds, mine suffers. In Suskind’s view, that’s a mistake. “American individualism has trickled into this idea of parenting as a go-it-alone thing,” she says—when in fact, the nation’s 63 million parents represent a powerful and unified interest group.

In *Parent Nation*, Suskind cites the example of AARP and its work on behalf of US seniors. In the 1950s, Americans over 65 were among the poorest and most underserved groups in the country. But senior poverty has fallen dramatically since then, thanks in no small part to programs such as Medicare and Social Security—for which AARP strongly advocates. Suskind says, “I see the same potential in parents.”

She’s trying to plant the seeds of that movement. It helps that her TMW Center cofounder **John List**, the Kenneth C. Griffin Distinguished Service Professor in Economics and the College, is an expert in how ideas scale. (Suskind and List married in 2018.) To coincide with the release of *Parent Nation*, center staff are in the process of developing a curriculum for what they call “parent villages,” local groups that are meant to offer support and promote solidarity in advocating for change.

Her hope is that these informal organizations will allow parents to look at one another and see what they have in common, despite their surface differences. It’s the same approach she took in her book. “I intentionally told the stories of families from all different backgrounds—race, religion, education, family construct—to show that, ultimately, they all want the same things,” Suskind says. They want to give their children the best chance in life. They just need a little help.

Can lots of parent villages come together and make the parent nation Suskind envisions? Can someone take the idea of an AARP for parents and run with it? Even Suskind, with her seemingly boundless energy, admits she’ll need help. She’s got a research center to run and, of course, surgeries to perform. “I can’t leave the operating room. But somebody’s got to do it,” she says. Then she spots her moment to recruit a new member of the movement, and smiles. “Maybe you.” ♦

OFF THE SHELF

*Selling books is unlike selling anything else.
The Seminary Co-op director counts the ways.*

BY JEFF DEUTSCH



In April Princeton University Press published *In Praise of Good Bookstores* by Seminary Co-op Bookstore director Jeff Deutsch. Part manifesto, part love letter to his profession, the book is a natural successor to the store's transition to a not-for-profit corporation in 2019. That decision, spearheaded by Deutsch, was made to ensure the store's survival, but it also served to redefine what the best bookstores are: a precious cultural institution whose chief "product" is the book-browsing experience.

To read Deutsch's book is, aptly, to cross the paths of dozens of writers and booksellers who had something to say about, in Deutsch's coinage, "the bookish landscape." A few of their—and his—bibliophilic observations are offered here for your browsing pleasure.—*L. D.*

From Chapter One Space

In his history of reading, Alberto Manguel, an exemplary reader and supremely bookish writer, tells of Abdul Kassem Ismael, the tenth-century grand vizier of Persia, and his 400 camels that carried his collection of 117,000 books when he traveled. Through a dexterous feat of herd indexing, he trained the camels to walk in alphabetical order, lest his collection succumb to the tyrant of chance.

"A bookstore is somewhat like an ocean—it may look the same, but it is always changing, if you are a careful observer."—Bookseller Paul Yamazaki

“It happens to us once or twice in a lifetime to be drunk with some book which probably has some extraordinary *relative* power to intoxicate us and none other; and having exhausted that cup of enchantment we go groping in libraries all our years afterwards in the hope of being in paradise again.”—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Of the 28,000 titles the Seminary Co-op sold in 2019, nearly 17,000 were single copies. ... Simply put, book discovery can't be mass-produced; it is a highly individualized endeavor.

The business model has failed us, not we it. We need to build a model that supports a vast, slow-selling inventory of books—just books—deliberately assembled to provide even the most world-weary reader with a browse that surprises and delights.

From Chapter Two
Abundance

From Chapter Three
Value

From Chapter Four
Community

From Chapter Five
Time

We are aware that some of our customers might want help or a kindly greeting from a bookseller, but just as many will insist on a certain decorum whereby we disturb the bookstore code of silence only after an invite from the patron.

While those who need help deserve the same swift, knowing, and affable engagement they might expect to receive across any other service counter ... the bookseller must recognize that it is the company of books, more than the company of booksellers, that brings readers into the shop, at least at first.

The sort of focus required of the browser also facilitates a quieting of obstreperous emotions and thoughts; anxiety, self-satisfaction, regret, and insecurity, for instance, are exposed as ephemeral and overwhelmingly illusory.

The aspiration of the bookseller is to provide the conditions, by the power of the good bookstore, to slow the reader down that they might behold a more capacious vision of the possible.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Mealtime conversation with the Korean Vegan.

BY JEANIE CHUNG

In September 2020, **Joanne Lee Molinaro**, JD'04, jokingly told her followers, "You have to stop crying at my TikToks. Like, seriously, it's just a cooking video."

On TikTok for less than two months, she'd already become a viral sensation, largely because her posts are more than "just" cooking videos. In eloquent voiceovers, Molinaro invites viewers into her kitchen, her home, and her life. Whether she's talking about her parents' experiences emigrating from North Korea to South Korea, her own upbringing in America, or her personal philosophy, she is open, compassionate, and unapologetically opinionated—all while preparing vegan dishes, most of them updating the Korean cuisine she grew up with.

In one post that has 2.5 million views to date, she tells a story about her mother defending her from a fat-shaming woman in a store, while on video she makes a noodle dish called *japchae*. In another, she recounts her dad's support of her divorce as she prepares a spicy tofu dish: nine million views. (She has since remarried; her husband, pianist Anthony Molinaro, is another frequent topic and occasional guest, and his music often accompanies the videos.)

Soon Molinaro was more than a partner in a law firm with a fun side hustle. As the Korean Vegan, she introduced staples like *gochujang*, a spicy chili paste, and *tteokbokki*, chewy rice cakes, to both vegans and nonvegans whose knowledge of Korean food ended at kimchi and barbecue. Viewers familiar with the cuisine learned from her that *jjajangmyun*, a noodle dish with black bean sauce that happens to be Molinaro's favorite, could be made without pork, and that *gamjatang*—literally, "potato stew"—could focus on the potatoes instead of the meat.

There's no telling where Molinaro will venture with each new post. Her childhood, family, and running are frequent subjects, but she's caused a stir with episodes about politics, racism, and disordered eating. The one (near) constant—whether she's speaking as herself or in character as Gomoh, a Korean auntie—is food.

Molinaro's three million TikTok followers helped make her 2021 cookbook—a collection of recipes and personal

essays—a best seller. Both the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker* picked *The Korean Vegan Cookbook: Reflections and Recipes from Omma's Kitchen* (Avery) as one of the year's best cookbooks, with the latter calling the recipes "simultaneously personal and rooted in the practice of generations."

These days being the Korean Vegan is a full-time job. Molinaro has a weekly newsletter, an online meal planner, and a second book in the works, and she promotes all three on social media and her website (thekoreanvegan.com). Alongside all of that, she remains of counsel at Foley & Lardner LLP and teaches the occasional continuing legal education course.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

Why law school

"I'm an adult and I don't know what to do. Might as well go to law school." But once I got to the University of Chicago I felt I had really made a great decision. I loved my professors. Loved my classmates. I loved everything about it.

Although my career choice of lawyer was not made with a great deal of intention, everything I did thereafter was very purposeful.

Eat hate love

I have this love-hate relationship with food where I love to eat; it makes me happy. I love eating *jjajangmyun* and French fries and all those things, but eating those things is at odds with the body that I have been conditioned to seek. And that conditioning is probably something I can no longer erase.

That's one aspect of my relationship with food. We can also talk about how I hated Korean food until I went to college. I think that's very common among second-generation Korean Americans and Asian Americans.

We never ate anything other than Korean food growing up, except for maybe birthdays. So I hated it. Then when I got to the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, all the kids were eating Korean food.



In her parents' home, eating "was a serious business that demanded undivided attention," writes Joanne Lee Molinaro, JD'04, in her book's introduction.

in quarantine for a few months, and I felt like the world was blowing up. The irony is my husband and I had just moved into this beautiful home, and the whole purpose was to entertain. We had two dinner parties before we had to shut it all down.

The thinking was, I can't do real-life dinner parties, so I'll put these videos up. And when you go to a dinner party, yes, you enjoy the food. But your host isn't regaling you with the details of how she created the food. You're talking about what you did that day, an interesting thing I read in the news, or, oh, let me tell you this incredible story my mom told me.

Life in the comments section

In some respects, the avalanche of attention I started getting on TikTok was a blessing in disguise. If you've got 20,000 comments, you're not going to be able to read the bad ones. Even if I did see the occasional negative comment, it just didn't hit me in the way I expected it would.

That started to change once my content became more political. During the election fraud accusations of November 2020,

when I started posting more about my thoughts, it became much harder to ignore some of the negativity. Sometimes I would try my best and would be successful. Sometimes I would be totally unsuccessful, and it would ruin my day. And sometimes I would use it to create more content that went viral. [Molinaro's November 8 video explaining the rules of civil procedure regarding fraud claims in the presidential election ultimately turned into a piece for the *Atlantic*.]

Vegan philosophy

The reason people have this notion of veganism as being elitist is because part of it is true. I'm very privileged that I get to make these ethical calls on my food, as opposed to having no money and just eating whatever I can get into my stomach, like my parents did.

When I went to Korea to do research for the book, I met with Jeong Kwan Sunim, a Korean Buddhist nun who does not eat animal products as part of her philosophy. She said, "I don't call myself vegan. What the hell does vegan even mean?"

There's a lot embedded in that word, for good or for bad. Part of what I'm trying to do is take that word and use it in a way that's empowering as opposed to gatekeeping. ♦

Korean Vegan isn't an oxymoron

Korea's culinary evolution is as complicated and nuanced as every other country's. It's not straightforward.

One of the dangers of the popularity of Korea, as represented by BTS, by *Parasite*, and by Korean barbecue and *gochujang*, is there's this risk—almost an inevitability—of flattening. All our music is BTS. All Korean food is barbecue and *gochujang* and *bibimbap*. And unfortunately, a lot of people assume, incorrectly, that Korean people don't know how to do vegan.

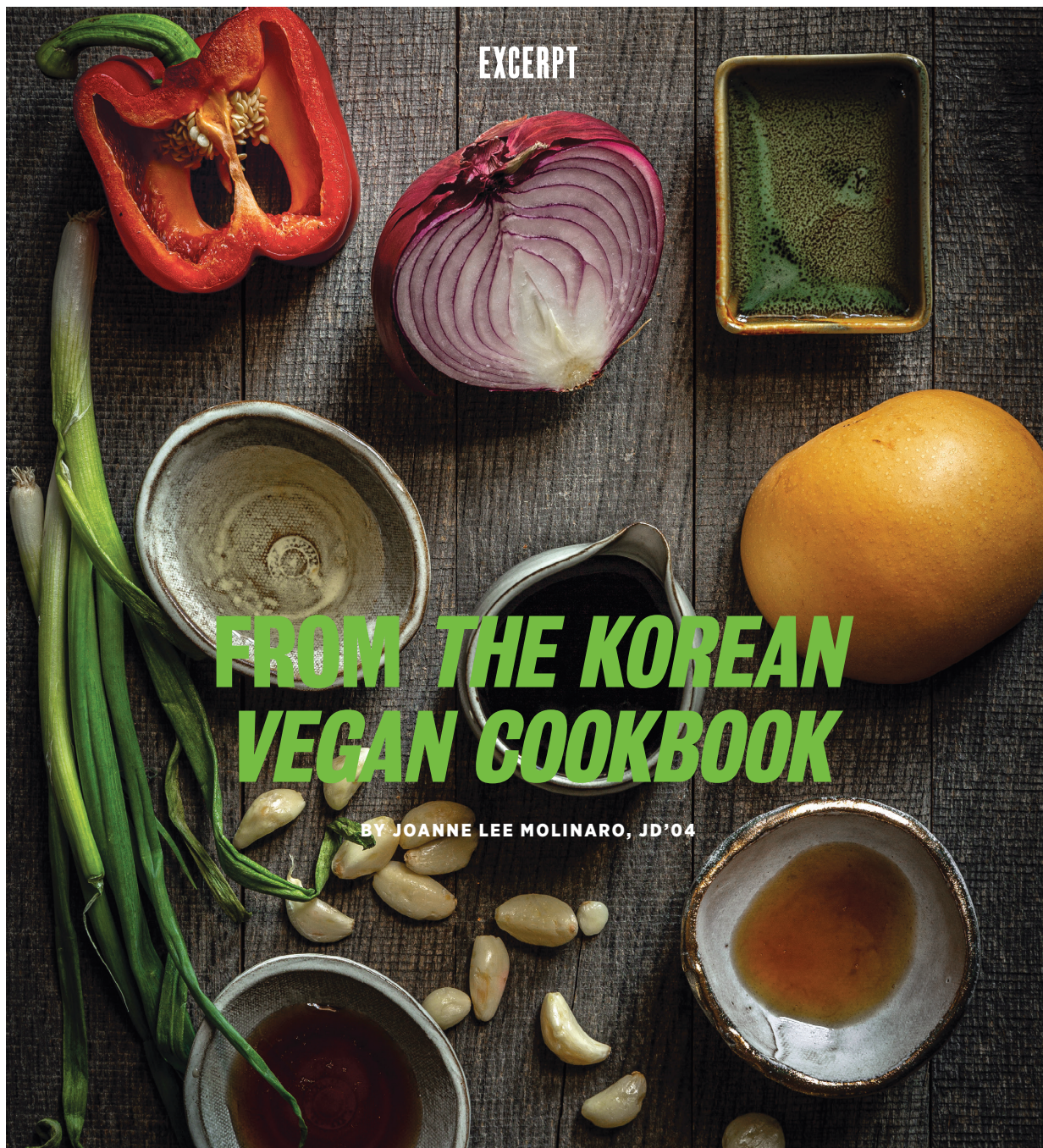
There's an argument that Korean food is the best for vegans. It's delicious, and so much of it is already vegetable-centric.

What her parents think

When my parents went on the book tour with me and they saw the kind of impact I was having on my community, my father in particular was agog.

The art of conversation

When I started posting these TikToks, we had all been stuck



EXCERPT

FROM THE KOREAN VEGAN COOKBOOK

BY JOANNE LEE MOLINARO, JD'04

*For Joanne Lee Molinaro, food and family are inseparably tangled up together. So in *The Korean Vegan Cookbook: Reflections and Recipes from Omma's Kitchen*, the reflections loom as large as the recipes. In two short essays excerpted from the book, Molinaro recounts stories about her Omma (mother) and Appa (father).*

Omma and sweet potatoes

After my mother's family crossed the 38th parallel when my mother was about a year old, they landed in a small valley along the southern fringe of South Korea called Suk Bong Rhee, Chun La Namdo. They were referred to as "Korean War refugees."

They were homeless. My grandparents traveled from house to house, begging for scraps of food and a place to sleep for the night. When they were lucky, they dug up leftover vegetables from recently harvested fields to supplement their daily meal of watery porridge.

Eventually, my grandfather was able to find a job as a janitor at a local middle

When Molinaro went vegan, she didn't want to lose the connection to her Korean heritage, so she found herself once again in her Omma's kitchen learning family recipes.

school. He was good with his hands—he made kites for my mom and whittled toys for the neighborhood children. They were always poor, though.

Still, my mother remembers her childhood with great fondness. Poverty and war are powerful, yes. But so is the taste of fresh berries picked by your own hand along the ridge of a mountain lumbering over the hot months of summer like a drowsy silverback. Or the smell of barley heads snipped off their willowy bodies and roasted over an open flame beneath a blanket of preening stars. Her favorite, though, has always been sweet potatoes.

"You know, when I eat these sweet potatoes ..." My mother has a way of saying her words in English as if they are too big for her mouth. She cuts them up into small pieces—"poe-tae-toes."

"... when I eat these sweet potatoes, it always makes me remember when I was a little girl," she recounts one day while slicing up the bright orange yam I had just taken out of the toaster oven. My mother rarely comes by my house, but I am sick and she insisted on bringing me a vat of radish soup. To this day, my mother's soup is my cure-all. As a nurse, it's her way of showing affection and care (the word she often used instead of the awkward-sounding "love").

"Why?"

"Because," she starts, while holding out a gooey orange morsel. "Because," she reiterates, "these were the best food."

"What do you mean, the 'best food'?" In my mind, the list of "best foods" included French fries, Chicago-style deep-dish pizza, donuts. It did not include sweet potatoes.

"When we were refugees ..." she answers between mouthfuls, expertly peeling the skin off another stringy piece, before popping it into her mouth.

"Wait. When you guys got to South Korea?" I ask. I realize that I actu-



ally know very little about my mother's childhood. Other than the few snatches of conversation I managed to overhear over the years, most of what I "know" is nestled between Wikipedia and myth. This was the first I'd ever heard her talk about what it was like shortly after escaping North Korea.

"Mm-hmmm," she says from inside another mouthful. "We had nothing. Nothing. So, the people in that village, they would harvest these," holding up what remains of her potato in my face, "and then give us what they had left over. And we would eat them just like this," she finishes, while sucking

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her fingers. And I believe her, more than I've ever believed anything else she's ever said to me, because she isn't looking at me when she explains these things. My 4-foot 11-inch, 90-pound mother is too busy cleaning her plate.

"And then, afterwards, I would run over to the field and dig up whatever I could find, you know, just a small piece," then she shows me the underside of her hand, which has been her sign for "tiny" for as long as I can remember. "That was the way we lived back then."

She pauses to look up at me.

"That's why, when I retire, I want to serve. I want to serve that village. They were so good to us."

Appa's daughter

My father and I haven't always had the easiest relationship. He is naturally aloof, and therefore affection—verbal or otherwise—is a bit like a foreign language to him. For most of my life, we got along by tacitly agreeing to stay out of each other's way. It got to the point that just the sound of my father's footsteps or his voice could cause me anxiety.

Being the first child of an immigrant also created a weird dynamic between us. As I began to speak English fluently, I quickly assumed the role of "translator." At nine years old, I was the one calling and asking to speak with customer service, interacting with the store clerk at the cash register, or signing permission slips from school. At some point, before I was even a teenager, I witnessed how helpless my father seemed in the big American world, and as a result, I became the adult.

As my father grew older, I began to worry about how much time I had left to spend with him. I tried harder to find ways to hurdle the gap that had developed between us over the years. I

Molinaro smiles through the pain during the 2017 Chicago Marathon.

never dreamed that running would be the thing that helped bring us together.

Despite a lifetime of hating running, in 2017, I signed up for my first marathon—the Chicago Marathon. My mother was in Korea, so she wasn't able to cheer me on from the sidelines. My father, though, insisted on taking the 5:30 a.m. bus with a group of people he didn't even know from a local Korean community organization, just so he could cheer for me at Mile 20. To be honest, I didn't want him there. Without my mom there to take care of him, it would be up to me to make sure he was where he needed to be at the right time, and I already had twenty-six miles to worry about. I chatted with him on the phone the night before, hoping to dissuade him from coming.

"Daddy, are you sure you want to come? You really don't need to ... I mean, it's so early in the morning and it might get cold ..."

"Yah, I see you at Mile 20! Oh sure sure sure, I will be there! How long you think you going to take?"

I remember a lot of things from my first marathon: the fireflies stomping around my stomach while I waited for the starting pistol to pop off, my husband jogging with me through a bit of Chinatown before I waved him off in overheated delirium, and the handful of aspirins I downed at Mile 18 when the smooth Chicago pavement started to feel like shattered glass. But, my most memorable moment during the Chicago Marathon was at Mile 20. When I heard "Jo-ENNE!!" and saw my father's face split into a smile that struck my ribs open with a gong. My seventy-two-year-old father with prostate cancer and a bad back tried his best to jog next to me, handed me the water bottle he had been holding in his hands since the crack of dawn, for nearly six hours, so that he wouldn't

I FIT THE SMALL KIMBAP IN HIS EMPTY HAND AND SKIPPED AWAY, LEAVING A RIBBON OF PINK LAUGHTER IN MY WAKE.

miss this five-second window to pass it to me while asking, "Do you want me to run with you? Can I run with you?"

I left my father behind at Mile 20, wiping tears and sweat from my face, because in that moment, my dad, the one I'd spent my entire life protecting with my English-speaking shield, wanted to be and was stronger than his American daughter.

Three years later, I finally ceded to my father's yearly invitations to join him for a family trip to Korea. We spent ten days trying to cram in two decades' worth of visits I'd neglected to make. One day we decided to head to one of the nearby national parks, home to one of the most famous Buddhist temples and Buddhist monks.

We had driven hours to get to Naejangsan National Park and finally

pulled into a large parking lot next to what appeared to be a sizable pond at the foot of a long and winding path that led up to the temple. We had packed some *kimbap* (Korean rolls) and *tteok* (rice cakes) left over from the feast we had had the night before, and we decided to refuel before climbing to the top of the sprawling hill.

Though my sister-in-law warned me that the *kimbap* we'd packed would no longer be tasty, they looked too inviting to pass up. I took one bite and instantly recalled that my sister-in-law is rarely wrong when it comes to food. Not wanting to waste it, though, I canvassed our little troupe to see who might eat my leftovers. Daddy stood at the edge of the pond, his left hand entwined in the strap of the camcorder I had bought him for this trip. A collar of happy trees, their boughs bright green and heavy with summer's promise, supplied a shaded spot from which he could consider the dark reflections that shimmered on the surface.

Clutching the half-eaten *kimbap*, I skipped over to him. Giggling, and before he could say anything, I fit the small *kimbap* in his empty hand and skipped away, leaving a ribbon of pink laughter in my wake. He called after me, "What? I don't want this!" But I just laughed harder, reveling in how perfectly the uneaten piece of food fit inside my father's curved fingers, how colorful it looked against his walnut skin and beneath the cool eaves of the shifting trees, how I was spending the entire day with my dad in a place that made me feel more like his little girl than any place on Earth. ♦



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PEER REVIEW

WHAT ALUMNI ARE THINKING AND DOING

PERSON TO PERSON

The residence hall telephone booth, a hub of everyday campus life when this 1952 photo was taken, has gone the way of bobby socks and loafers. But some things are eternal, like calling home or catching up with friends. You can always drop us a line too—either through your class correspondent or c/o Alumni News Editor at uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.

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NOTES

A SELECTION OF ALUMNI WHOSE NAMES ARE IN THE NEWS

ASTRONOMICAL AWARD

Samuel Harvey Moseley Jr., SM'74, PhD'79—VP of hardware engineering at Quantum Circuits Inc. and senior astrophysicist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center—has received the 2022 James Craig Watson Medal from the National Academy of Sciences, awarded every two years for outstanding contributions to astronomy. Moseley's detector development has led to groundbreaking measurements of the cosmic microwave background radiation: leftover light from the big bang that may shine new light on the conditions of the early universe. Moseley also developed the microshutter array, technology that allows the James Webb Space Telescope to collect data 100 times faster than existing spectroscopic instruments, enabling a detailed study of the first galaxies to form.

SOBERING THOUGHT

In January political commentator and podcaster **Ana Marie Cox**, AB'94, launched a column about sobriety for the *Cut*, a *New York Magazine* affiliate publication. Cox, who has been sober for a decade, describes Sober Questioning as a column “for other people who also don't want to drink today.” Questions she has fielded include: “How can I make connections at work without raging at office happy hour?” and “What can I do to support my newly sober partner?” Cox qualifies that she doesn't offer advice or answers—just what has worked for her and a space for people to engage in discussion.

NEUROSURGICAL FOCUS

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health professor **Robert Dempsey**, MD'77, has been awarded the 2021 Neurosurgical Society of America Medal for Outstanding Service. The annual honor recognizes his contributions to patient care, stroke research, education, and global neurosurgery. For more than 35 years, he has studied cerebral ischemia (oxygen deprivation caused by a disruption of blood supply to the brain), vascular cognitive decline, and brain injury repair. Dempsey also chairs



BAR TENDER

The new owner of the Woodlawn Tap, popularly known as Jimmy's, is intimately familiar with the Hyde Park institution, having worked there for nearly 30 years. **Matt Martell**, AB'95, began pulling pints as a College student and, after graduating, began managing Saturday nights and booking bands when the bar was known for live music. He took a few years off for law school. After passing the Illinois bar exam in 2000, Martell established his own solo practice, still active today, and returned to his old post at Jimmy's. As owner, he hopes to revive the Woodlawn Tap's live music scene and add improv and spoken word events.

the Foundation for International Education in Neurological Surgery, which trains physicians in under-resourced countries and sets up neurosurgical residency programs.

COMPREHENSIVE CARE

Ben Ho Park, AB'89, has been named director of the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, which is known for its research in genomics, cancer epidemiology, and cancer disparities. The center's deputy director since 2021, Park also leads Precision Oncology and the Division of Hematology and Oncology. As a physician-scientist, he headed the team that identified a correlation between PIK3CA gene mutations and breast cancer. He also pioneered “liquid biopsies” that identify tumor DNA in samples of blood and other bodily fluids. Park starts his new role on July 1.

REGIONAL RECOGNITION

The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies—a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing knowledge about Russia, Central Eurasia, and Eastern and Central

Europe—gave two of its annual prizes to UChicago alumni.

The ASEES's University of Southern California Book Prize in Literary and Cultural Studies, which recognizes an exceptional monograph on the region, has been awarded to **Carol Any**, AB'73, AM'74, PhD'82, for *The Soviet Writers' Union and Its Leaders: Identity and Authority under Stalin* (Northwestern University Press, 2020). Any, a Trinity College (CT) professor, describes the advantages afforded to writers loyal to the state and argues that Stalin chose leaders for the union who had psychological traits he could exploit.

The association's Beth Holmgren Graduate Student Essay Prize was awarded to **Moira O'Shea**, AM'16, for “‘We Took the National Game and Turned It into a Sport’: Playing Kok Boru and Re-Inventing Tradition in Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan.” In her article about the traditional horse game, the UChicago doctoral student in sociology examines how the pastime is “being transformed for use in a globalizing context and the limits to this transformation.”

—Maureen Searcy

Photography by Aaron Gettinger, AM'17/Hyde Park Herald

RELEASES

ALUMNI BOOKS, FILMS, AND RECORDINGS



ONE QUARTER OF THE NATION: IMMIGRATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF AMERICA

By Nancy Foner, AM'68, PhD'71; Princeton University Press, 2022

Many scholars have studied the experience of immigrants to the United States. In *One Quarter of the Nation*, sociologist Nancy Foner offers a far-ranging look at how immigrants and their children—nearly 86 million people in all—have transformed America. Immigration, she concludes, remains good for the United States and inseparable from its meaning. Every aspect of the country, from electoral politics to popular culture, from big cities to rural hamlets, has been shaped by nonnative Americans.

DELE WEDS DESTINY

By Tomi Obaro, AB'12; Knopf, 2022

At a wedding in Lagos, Nigeria, three college friends, now in their 50s, are reunited. One of the women, Funmi, is the mother of the bride. Enitan, whose marriage across cultures tested both partners, arrives with her American daughter. And Zainab has had to travel to Lagos without her older, ailing husband. In Tomi Obaro's debut novel, the women's celebration, in a richly

described present-day Nigeria, turns to scrutiny of the past and of themselves.

BRONZEVILLE NIGHTS: ON THE TOWN IN CHICAGO'S BLACK METROPOLIS

By Steven C. Dubin, AM'76, PhD'82; foreword by Margo Jefferson, LAB'64; CityFiles Press, 2021

Bronzeville, Chicago, in the 1940s and 1950s: the nights are alight with marquees and alive with the music of Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, and others who performed in the neighborhood's abundant clubs and dance halls. The moment proved fleeting, but jazz saxophonist Lonnie Simmons captured it in photographs—published for the first time in *Bronzeville Nights* by sociologist Steven C. Dubin, with a foreword by Pulitzer Prize winner Margo Jefferson. Go back in time to a South Side scene now almost forgotten.

STREET SCRIPTURES: BETWEEN GOD AND HIP-HOP

By Alejandro Nava, AM'92, PhD'97; University of Chicago Press, 2022

Religious studies scholar Alejandro E. Nava explores a little-noticed element of hip-hop music and culture:

spirituality. In the lyrics and sound of rap, reggaeton, and Latinx hip-hop, Nava uncovers religious feeling, meaning, and questioning that he places in a tradition threading back to William James and even to St. Augustine. In the "street theology" he teases out of hip-hop, prominent themes include the music's blending of the sacred and the profane as well as its truth telling about racial and social justice.

SO SIMPLE A BEGINNING: HOW FOUR PHYSICAL PRINCIPLES SHAPE OUR LIVING WORLD

By Raghuv eer Parthasarathy, PhD'02; Princeton University Press, 2022

Biophysics offers a key to understanding how a small set of basic principles undergird the whole dizzying array of life-forms on earth. In *So Simple a Beginning*, University of Oregon physicist Raghuv eer Parthasarathy provides an understanding of four critical constants: self-assembly, regulatory circuits, predictable randomness, and scaling. Readers also learn why work at the interface of biology and physics has the potential to revolutionize the health sciences—but also to spark intense controversy.

—Laura Demanski, AM'94

For additional alumni book releases, use the link to the *Magazine's* Goodreads bookshelf at mag.uchicago.edu/alumni-books.

ALUMNI NEWS

FROM THE CLASSES, SCHOOLS, AND DIVISIONS

To protect the privacy of our alumni, we have removed the class notes from this section. The remaining advertisements and photos have been consolidated to reduce the number of pages. If you are an alumnus of the University of Chicago and would like class notes from our archives, please email uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.



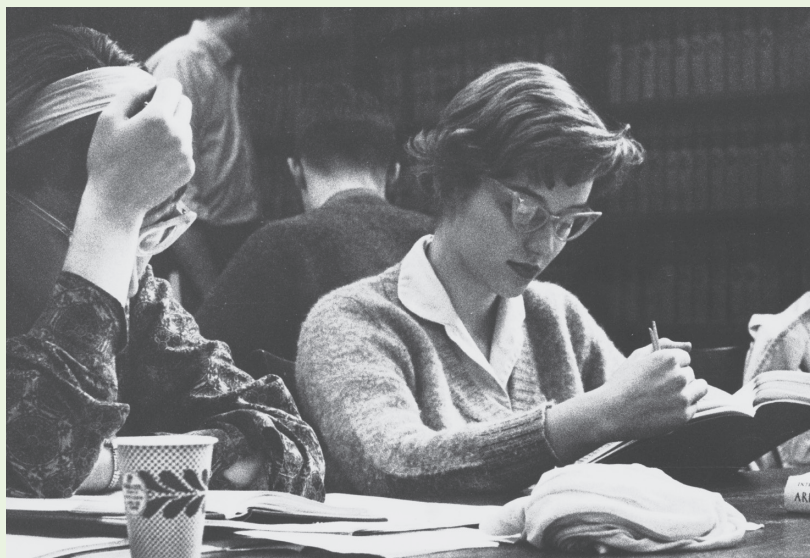
The calm before the crowds: The stage is set in Hutchinson Court for the University's 87th Convocation on June 10, 1913. Degree candidates processed to the University of Chicago Military Band's rendition of the triumphal march from Verdi's *Aida*. Dutch foreign minister to the US Jonkheer John Loudon delivered the convocation address. The Hutch Court ceremony, which culminated in an address from University president Harry Pratt Judson, marked nearly two decades since the University's first outdoor convocation in the summer of 1894. That open-air tradition continues this year, with the 536th Convocation taking place on the main quad on June 4.

What's new? We are always eager to receive your news, care of the Alumni News Editor, *The University of Chicago Magazine*, 5235 South Harper Court, Chicago, IL 60615, or by email: uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu. No engagements, please. Items may be edited for space. As news is published in the order in which it arrives, it may not appear immediately. We list news from all former undergraduates (including those with UChicago graduate degrees) by the year of their undergraduate affiliation. All former students who received only graduate degrees are listed in the advanced degrees section.



Photography by Mildred Ladue Mead; UChicago Photographic Archive, ap12-03873, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Talent in full supply: Artist Rainey Bennett, PhB'30, shows his portfolio to a prospective buyer at the 57th Street Art Fair in 1956. The painter and commercial illustrator was known during his College days for leading a jazz band, Rainey Bennett's Syncopators, that performed regularly at campus dances and receptions. He played banjo. As an artist, Bennett made his name with a series of watercolor paintings of Venezuela commissioned in 1939 by Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and Nelson Rockefeller. By the mid-1950s, he had also established a career in Chicago as a book illustrator for Scott Foresman and other publishers. The 57th Street Art Fair, which takes place annually during the first full weekend in June, celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.



UChicago Photographic Archive, ap14-01954, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Space-age pupils: There's no convocation exuberance without the finals week grind. With specs trained on their texts, these cat-eyed scholars made Harper Memorial Library their study space of choice. What was your go-to spot on campus when it came time to hole up and prepare for finals, and what were your most memorable finals week experiences? Write to us at uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.



Salon de Pierce: Germanic studies professor Kenneth Northcott (right), the resident master of Pierce Hall, hosts English tenor Peter Pears (left) during a 1976 student open house at the residence hall. The gathering was pictured in a *University of Chicago Magazine* article heralding a new era in residential life: “The dorms abound with lectures and informal seminars, musical events, and occasions for discussion with faculty members and other scholars.” What are your memories of the social and intellectual buzz at your residence hall? Did your house play host to special events or memorable speakers? Write to us at uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.



Hustle and row: University of Chicago Crew takes advantage of springtime in Hutchinson Court to clock miles for their 1986 “ergathon” fundraiser, in which they logged 1,150 miles and raised nearly \$2,800—with some rowers reaching as many as 50 miles each and the record setter hitting 100. First held the previous year, the ergathon took its name from the rowing machine (ergometer) that crew members used for land training. In the marathon, the indoor rower—a standard Concept2 model—became a tool for putting up stats and turning them into dollars: crew members secured donation-per-mile pledges from individuals and businesses, with proceeds going to buy new racing equipment and defray other operating costs.

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Closing time: In the summer of 1997, the F. W. Woolworth Company announced plans to shutter its five-and-dime variety stores nationwide. The closing sale at the Woolworth's in the Hyde Park Shopping Center gave locals one last chance to score deals on everyday goods before the shelves at the 55th Street and Lake Park Avenue store emptied forever that August. "The dime-store era was over," lamented the *Chicago Tribune*, noting that "Woolworth's represented a way of life in America, one in which a spool of thread sometimes shared shelf space with a plastic kazoo." Were you a Woolworth's patron? Do you remember shopping there for essentials or oddities, or rubbing elbows with classmates or neighbors at the lunch counter? Send us a note at uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.

Photography by Yong Kim, SB'00. Copyright 2022, The Chicago Maroon. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

DEATHS

FACULTY AND STAFF

Allan Rechtschaffen, professor emeritus of psychology, psychiatry, and in the College, died November 29 in Chicago. He was 93. A leading figure in establishing sleep research as an academic and clinical discipline, Rechtschaffen joined the University in 1957 as a clinician in the Department of Psychiatry. He soon became the director of the University's Sleep Research Laboratory (today's Sleep Research Center), founded in 1925 by Nathaniel Kleitman, PhD'23, the first such facility in the world. Inspired by Kleitman's work on REM sleep, Rechtschaffen spent the next four decades working to identify the biological function and purpose of sleep. By studying the effects of sleep deprivation, primarily with rats, he concluded in a landmark 1983 paper that sleep is essential to survival. He cofounded and later led the Sleep Research Society, from which he received the Distinguished Scientist Award in 1989. He is survived by his wife, **Karen Culberg Rechtschaffen**, AM'68; three stepdaughters, including **Katherine L. Culberg**, LAB'86, and **Laura Culberg**, LAB'86; and four grandchildren.

Robert S. Daum, professor of pediatric infectious diseases, died February 1 in Brookeville, MD. He was 75. While at McGill University, where he earned bachelor and medical degrees, Daum discovered a genetic link for a metabolic disorder—work that led to a reduction in deaths and developmental impairments in infants. Daum devoted much of his career to finding a vaccine for the drug-resistant bacterium known as MRSA. Joining UChicago Medicine in 1988, Daum created a MRSA research center. He studied immunization rates at the former Robert Taylor Homes on Chicago's South Side and community-associated MRSA infections at the Cook County Jail. Daum volunteered in Haiti following its 2010 earthquake. In 2017 he joined the faculty of the Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He is survived by his wife, Susan; daughter **Abigail Daum**, LAB'13; two sons; two stepdaughters, including **Shannon Vavra**, LAB'12; a sister; two brothers; and four grandchildren.

Robert A. Butler, PhD'51, professor emeritus in surgery (otolaryngology) and psychology, of Spring Green, WI, died February 5. He was 98. Butler taught for several years at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied curiosity in monkeys. In 1957 he joined the faculty at UChicago, where he began to study hearing with an emphasis on the localization of sound and auditory perception. An important finding of his work was that humans could make vertical distinctions about location based on temporal frequency. Butler served as president of the Association for Research

in Otolaryngology and was a fellow at the Acoustical Society of America. At the University, he chaired the Department of Behavioral Science (1979–82) and was acting chair of otolaryngology when he took emeritus status in 1984. Butler became a runner at 55, winning the St. Louis Marathon in his age group in 1981. He is survived by his wife, **Caroline Butler**, AM'52; daughters **Amy Butler**, LAB'72, **Ann Zimrin**, LAB'73, MD'81, **Cathy Avery**, LAB'75, and **Elizabeth Butler**, LAB'79, AM'90; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

1940s

Florence Dasaky, PhB'46, MBA'50, of Frankfort, IL, died June 12, 2021. She was 94. Dasaky was retired from Chicago's Sullivan High School, where she taught business education for several decades. She was a passionate world traveler and fan of the Chicago Cubs. Survivors include a niece and a great-nephew.

Dorothy "Dotty" Pikas Dale, EX'49, of Bellingham, WA, died March 10, 2020. A former preschool teacher, Dale taught for more than a decade at the City Colleges of Chicago Kennedy-King College. She and her husband, the late Rev. Alfred Dale Jr., DB'52, moved to Washington State, where she became a founding supporter of the Whatcom Peace and Justice Center, providing seed funding and serving as a board member and board president. In 2006 she received the Rosemary and Howard Harris Lifetime Peacemaker Award. The Dotty Dale Youth Peacemaker Award was established in her honor in 2021. Dale's husband died in 2014. She is survived by a daughter, **Ana K. Gobleale**, AM'77; two sons; four grandchildren, including **Thandiwe A. Dale-Ferguson**, MDiv'13; and four great-grandchildren.

Eunice T. Goldberg-Greene, AM'49, of Encinitas, CA, died February 13, 2021. She was 95. Goldberg-Greene earned her master's degree from the School of Social Service Administration (now the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice). She worked in home health and social services, including for San Diego Home Patient Care, and was a mentor to many. Her first husband, Nathan Goldberg, AB'40, JD'46, died in 1978. She is survived by two sons, including **Joel I. Goldberg**, LAB'70, MBA'79, and a brother.

Lorraine Friedman, AM'47, died in May 2021 in Chicago. She was 97. Beginning her career as a caseworker with the State of Illinois Department of Child and Family Services, she licensed and supervised foster homes and conducted adoptive home studies. Friedman then joined the Chicago Board of Education in 1966, serving as one of the first social workers with the Chicago Public Schools and retiring in 1998. Her husband, Norman B. Friedman, MBA'67,

died in 1999. She is survived by a daughter, **Adele Friedman**, LAB'72, and a son, **Victor A. Friedman**, LAB'66, AM'71, PhD'75, the Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus in the Humanities.

Anne Colwell Askren, AB'47, of Athens, GA, died September 11. She was 93. The daughter of UChicago administrator Ernest Cadman Colwell, PhD'30, who served as president and chief operating officer under Chancellor Robert Maynard Hutchins, Askren grew up near the University and earned her bachelor's in French. With a master's in the field from Emory University, she taught French at the Westminster Schools in Atlanta. After raising her children, she returned to work as a regional copywriter for the publisher Scott Foresman and Company. Askren was active in her church as a secretary, an organist, and a choir singer. She is survived by two daughters, three sons, and 11 grandchildren.

Muriel D. Lezak, PhB'47, AM'49, died October 6 in Portland, OR. She was 94. Trained as a clinical psychologist, Lezak helped pioneer the field of neuropsychology. After practicing and teaching psychology at Portland State University and the University of Portland, she began working as a clinician in 1966 at Portland's Veterans Administration hospital, where she treated former soldiers experiencing neurological trauma. This experience spurred her research on brain injuries and disorders. She went on to write the definitive textbook on the subject, *Neuropsychological Assessment* (1976); its forthcoming sixth edition will be titled, in the author's honor, *Lezak's Neuropsychological Assessment*. Her husband, Sidney I. Lezak, PhB'46, JD'49, died in 2006. She is survived by two daughters and nine grandchildren.

Mimi Levin Lieber, AB'48, AM'51, died October 16 in New York City. She was 93. After studying social psychology at UChicago, Lieber went to work at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research, learning techniques that she would help introduce into the marketing industry through her pioneering use of focus groups. At her firm Lieber Attitude Research, she worked with major advertising agencies and corporate clients to mold the behaviors of the postwar American consumer. An authority on marketing to women, she hatched a notable success in the late 1960s with her work on the L'eggs pantyhose line for Hanes. Lieber also served on the New York Board of Regents, urging increased funding for low-income schools before founding her own early childhood literacy nonprofit. She is survived by a daughter, three sons, two brothers, and 10 grandchildren.

Zelda Toll Edelson, AB'49, died November 12 in Haverford, PA. She was 92. For more than two decades, Edelson was head of publications at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History. After her 1995 retirement, Edelson took up painting and began

writing poetry, tackling such subjects as her own mortality. Her works were exhibited in Woodbridge, CT, and in galleries around Philadelphia. Her husband, Marshall Edelson, PhD'46, PhD'54, MD'55, died in 2005. She is survived by a daughter; two sons, including **Jonathan T. Edelson**, MD'86; a sister, **Charlotte Thurschwell**, AB'51, AM'54; and six grandchildren, including **Zachary E. Edelson**, AB'11, and **Eli A. Edelson**, AB'13.

1950s

Franklin Sherman, AM'52, PhD'61, died August 31 in Bethlehem, PA. He was 93. Sherman served as pastor of Advent Lutheran Church in Chicago in the early 1950s, then taught at the University of Iowa and the University of Oxford's Mansfield College. In 1966 he joined the faculty of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, where he taught for 23 years, serving for 10 years as dean of faculty. As a founding director of the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding at Muhlenberg College, he consulted with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in its 1994 declaration renouncing the anti-Semitic writings of Martin Luther. He is survived by a daughter, **Leslie Sherman**, LAB'81; two sons; and four grandchildren.

Edwin M. Bridges, AM'56, PhD'64, died March 7, 2019, in Stanford, CA. He was 85. Bridges, a professor of education at Stanford University, was known for the problem-based learning he applied to training educators. A former school principal, Bridges established the Prospective Principals' Program at Stanford's Graduate School of Education to build management and organizational skills in K-12 administrators. Bridges previously taught at Washington University; UChicago; and the University of California, Santa Barbara. In 2010, to honor Bridges's contributions to his field, the University Council for Educational Administration created the Edwin M. Bridges Award. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; a daughter; two sons; and four grandchildren.

Neil Proshan, MD'58, of Princeton, NJ, died May 21, 2020. He was 86. After completing his residency in radiology at the Roosevelt Hospital (now Mount Sinai West) in Manhattan, he served as a captain in the US Army. In 1964 Proshan took a position in St. Francis Medical Center's radiology department in Trenton, NJ. Six years later he and two other radiologists cofounded Radiology Affiliates of Central New Jersey (now known as Radiology Affiliates Imaging), a practice from which he retired in 1997. He is survived by his wife, Maribeth; a daughter; two sons, including **David A. Proshan**, JD'92; and seven grandchildren.

David H. Kistner, AB'52, SB'56, PhD'57, died March 10, 2021, in Chico, CA. He was 89. An expert on the taxonomy of insects that live with ants and termites, Kistner was a professor of biology at California State University-Chico (1959-92), where he received several awards for his outstanding teaching. During extensive field trips in the

tropics of Africa, Asia, and South and Central America, he collected, systematized, and named more than 357 insect genera and species. Author or coauthor of over 200 scientific papers, he edited the journal *Sociobiology* and consulted for the Environmental Protection Agency. He was also an avid butterfly collector. His wife, Alzada Carlisle Kistner, EX'57, died in 2004. He is survived by two daughters, a brother, a sister, and two grandchildren.

George A. Schultz, AB'53, died May 15, 2021, in Hampton, NJ. He was 89. A US Army Korean War veteran with a doctorate in zoology, Schultz spent his career at what is now New Jersey City University, teaching biology, marine biology, and ecology. He also wrote guidebooks and articles on marine isopods. Traveling widely for his research, he collaborated with many scientists to identify species of crustaceans. Schultz took pride in holding research privileges at the American Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Institution.

William M. Leiter, AM'58, PhD'68, died September 19 in Long Beach, CA. He was 87. In 1966 Leiter joined the political science faculty at California State University, Long Beach, where he spent his entire academic career. A dedicated scholar and mentor, he specialized in constitutional law, public policy, and the American presidency. In addition to presenting papers at conferences around the world, he served on the editorial board of the *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, edited the book *California Government: Issues and Institutions* (1971), and cowrote *Affirmative Action in Antidiscrimination Law and Policy: An Overview and Synthesis* (2002). He is survived by his wife, **Sheila Fields Leiter**, AB'58.

Alan M. Fern, AB'50, AM'54, PhD'60, of Chevy Chase, MD, died September 13. He was 90. An art historian who specialized in American prints and photographs, Fern worked at the Library of Congress for 20 years before joining the Smithsonian Institution, where he served as director of the National Portrait Gallery for nearly two decades. By the time he retired in 2000, he had helped double the gallery's permanent collection. A life member of the board of the Smart Museum of Art, Fern received numerous honors, including the rank of chevalier in France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He is survived by his wife, **Lois Fern**, AB'54, AM'62, and sister, **Annette Fern**, AM'68.

Athan G. Theoharis, AB'56, AB'57, AM'59, PhD'65, died July 3 in Syracuse, NY. He was 84. Theoharis entered the College at age 16, going on to earn a master's in political science and a PhD in history. He held teaching positions at Texas A&M University, Wayne State University, and Marquette University, where he taught 20th-century American history for almost four decades. A Cold War historian early in his career, he began uncovering documents about the wiretapping activities of US federal intelligence agencies and came to serve on a Senate committee investigating the legality of those agen-

cies' intelligence operations. Emerging as an expert at using Freedom of Information Act requests to uncover secret documents, he became an authority on the FBI and its civil liberties abuses under J. Edgar Hoover. His works include the coauthored biography *The Boss: J. Edgar Hoover and the Great American Inquisition* (1988) and the edited volume *From the Secret Files of J. Edgar Hoover* (1991). He is survived by two daughters, a son, two sisters, a brother, and five grandchildren.

1960s

Paul Rabinow, AB'65, AM'67, PhD'70, died April 6, 2021, in Berkeley, CA. He was 76. Rabinow was professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, where he taught from 1978 until 2019. As a UChicago doctoral student he traveled to Morocco to conduct ethnographic research for his dissertation; the experience would form the basis of another work, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977). Early in his Berkeley career, Rabinow met French philosopher Michel Foucault. The pair collaborated on two books, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (1982), cowritten with Hubert Dreyfus, and *The Foucault Reader* (1984). Foucault's untimely death from HIV-AIDS complications steered Rabinow to coteach Berkeley's first course on the virus and to coin the concept of bi-sociality. Rabinow received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Science Foundation, and the French government named him Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Survivors include a son and a sister.

Raymond J. DeMallie Jr., AB'68, AM'70, PhD'71, died April 25, 2021, in Bloomington, IN. He was 74. A professor at the University of Indiana from 1973 to 2017, DeMallie began fieldwork in 1970 on reservations where the Sioux (Lakota, Dakota) and closely related Assiniboine (Nakota) peoples live. DeMallie focused on their language, creating recordings of historical traditions, myths, and tales. He edited the Plains volume of the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians* (2001). Through the American Indian Studies Research Institute, which he helped establish, DeMallie developed curricula for Native American languages and legal historical work. In 2004 he was named a Chancellor's Professor. He also was honored by the Plains Anthropological Society with its 2019 Distinguished Service Award.

Ronald F. Inglehart, AM'62, PhD'67, died May 8, 2021, in Ann Arbor, MI. He was 86. Inglehart joined the University of Michigan in 1966, where he was the Amy and Alan Loewenstein Professor of Democracy, Democratization, and Human Rights. Inglehart, who published more than 400 articles and authored or coauthored 14 books during his career, was one of the most cited political scientists in the world. A fellow of

the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, his research explored how changes in human values affect politics in societies worldwide. As founding president of the World Values Survey, he conducted national surveys of more than 100 societies, collecting data on the values of ordinary people. He is survived by his wife, Marita; three daughters, including **Elizabeth Inglehart Miller**, LAB'83; two sons; a sister; and nine grandchildren.

Raymond T. Shepherd, SM'67, PhD'70, of Chicago, died June 13. He was 82. After serving in the US Navy during the Vietnam War, Shepherd came to UChicago and earned his master's and PhD in mathematics. He became a faculty member at Roosevelt University in Chicago, where he taught math for more than three decades. Shepherd continued his mathematics research into the last months of his life.

Richard A. De Angelis, AM'69, PhD'79, died July 30 in Marseilles, France. He was 77. After spending part of his youth in Athens, Greece, where his father worked for the US Marshall Plan, De Angelis studied sociology as an undergraduate at Harvard and became one of 17 student authors of *Chanzeaux: A Village in Anjou* (1966), a study of rural French life edited by his mentor Lawrence Wylie. Earning his UChicago master's and PhD in political science, De Angelis published his dissertation as *Blue-Collar Workers and Politics: A French Paradox* (1982). He spent most of his career at Flinders University in Australia, retiring in 2009 to the French village of Sérignan. He is survived by two daughters, two sisters, a brother, and two grandchildren.

Eugene N. Borza, AM'62, PhD'66, died September 5 in Harrisburg, PA. He was 86. An expert on the ancient kingdom of Macedonia, Borza taught history at Penn State University for just over three decades. He also lectured for the Archaeological Institute of America and held visiting appointments at institutions including the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Among other works, he coedited *Philip II, Alexander the Great, and the Macedonian Heritage* (1982) and wrote *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon* (1990). Borza helped launch the Association of Ancient Historians and served two terms as its president. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Pavelko; a daughter; a son; and a grandchild.

Nadrian "Ned" Seeman, SB'66, died November 16 in New York City. He was 75. A revolutionary crystallographer, Seeman was the first to recognize DNA's potential as a building block for synthetic materials, launching the field of DNA nanotechnology. He exploited DNA's "sticky" properties to create crystal shapes not found in nature with potential to be used in nanoelectronics, drug delivery, and tissue engineering. A professor of chemistry at New York University since 1988, Seeman was the founding president of the International Society for Nanoscale Science, Computation, and Engineering, and a recipient of the

2010 Kavli Prize for Nanoscience. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Lipski.

1970s

Martin Northway, EX'70, died November 6, 2020, in Fulton, MO. He was 72. A journalist and freelance writer, Northway edited and wrote for two Chicago papers: the community newspaper *Inside* and the free arts journal *Strong Coffee*. Much of his writing covered his lifelong interests in history, the arts, and the American South. Northway also worked as president of the small regional publishing company Highland Press and as a reporter and managing editor at the *Brown County Democrat*. He is survived by a daughter, a son, three sisters, and four grandchildren.

Barry Robert Skura, AM'70, PhD'75, of Cold Spring, NY, died May 17, 2021. He was 73. After teaching at the university level early in his career, lifelong activist Skura served as a labor organizer in the 1980s in Boston and Brooklyn. He also worked for the New York City comptroller and at NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation (now NYC Health + Hospitals), where he developed systems to manage and assess governmental reimbursement at the local, state, and federal levels. An avid hiker, Skura was the backpack chair of the Appalachian Mountain Club's New York-New Jersey Chapter and led trips in New Zealand, Arizona, the Appalachian and Smoky Mountains, and the Adirondacks. He is survived by his wife, Kathy; two stepchildren; and four grandchildren.

Wayne E. Nacker, SM'72, died June 13 in Atlanta. He was 74. While earning his UChicago master's in chemistry, Nacker worked in a research laboratory investigating sickle cell disease. Later, with a JD from DePaul University, he worked in intellectual property law at the Chicago firm Fitch, Even, Tabin & Flannery; at the manufacturer Morton Thiokol; and at MicroCoating Technologies Inc. in Atlanta. A world traveler, Nacker also led groups in outdoor activities and service projects. He is survived by his partner, Trudy; a daughter, **Chelsea Nacker Wraith**, MBA'21; a son; a sister; and a brother.

Janis M. Oldham, AB'78, of Greensboro, NC, died July 14. She was 65. Oldham earned her doctorate in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley, specializing in differential geometry. She was an associate professor of mathematics at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. A member of the National Association of Mathematicians (NAM), she served as editor of the *NAM Newsletter* and won the association's Stephens-Shabazz Teaching Award for her work helping develop mathematical talent in underrepresented undergraduate students. Oldham also provided mentorship through the EDGE (Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education) program for women in mathematics. She is survived by her mother and three brothers.

Ann Preston Drennan, AM'70, died August 19 in Craftsbury, VT. She was 87. At UChi-

cago, Drennan, who earned her degree in education, also worked in her department's library and as a research assistant in reading and adult education. She evaluated a federal adult basic education program in Appalachia until 1974, when she moved with her husband to Washington, DC. There Drennan held contract positions with the US Department of Education, Catholic University, and the World Bank. After 25 years with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Drennan retired to her native Vermont. She is survived by a daughter, two sons, six grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

1980s

Patricia Jane Cober Ashbrook, AM'83, died May 24, 2021, in Washington, DC. She was 95. Ashbrook began her career as an early childhood educator, serving inner-city, high-risk preschool children in Rochester, NY. She later changed to geriatric social work with the Aging Services Unit of the Family Services Department. After she and her husband moved to Evanston, IL, in 1981, Ashbrook was a caseworker for Parkside Adult Day Care Center in Glenview, IL, and then for United Charities in Chicago. She later became president of the Evanston Housing Coalition. She is survived by three daughters, a son, a sister, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Lonna Schroeder Braverman, MBA'86, died October 14 in Bozeman, MT, of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. She was 67. By the age of 17, Braverman had earned her pilot's license and was a competitive athlete. Living in Chicago, she began her career as a computer engineer, working for GTE Automatic Electric, SEI Information Technology, and Ygomi LLC. She also helped found the Chicago Women's Rugby Club. She is survived by a brother and two stepdaughters.

1990s

Justin C. Meilgaard, AM'90, died August 20 in Honolulu. He was 55. With his bachelor's in history and his master's in international relations, Meilgaard served as a study abroad adviser for Eastern Michigan University, the University of Colorado Boulder, and other institutions. He later worked in the dean's office at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Shidler College of Business. He is survived by a son and a brother.

2010s

Daniel P. Cherette, AB'11, died March 3, 2021, of cancer, in Washington, DC. He was 31. Cherette was a management consultant at L.E.K. Consulting in Chicago before moving with his wife, **Jenny Cho**, AB'11, to Washington, where he worked in economics consulting as a vice president of Compass Lexecon. Cherette graduated Phi Beta Kappa and served at UChicago as a student marshal. He is survived by his wife, his parents, a sister, and two brothers.

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THE UCHICAGOAN

Emily Landon

*Questions for the
infectious diseases specialist and
public health advocate.*



What surprising job have you had in the past?

When I was in high school and college, I used to sing at wedding ceremonies. I'm a soprano and would usually perform as a soloist.

What do you hate that everyone else loves?

I hate beer. To me, all beer tastes like soap. But that does not mean I don't like wine!

What do you love that everyone else hates?

Organic chemistry. I really enjoyed that class when everyone else absolutely hated it.

What book—or other work or idea—do you relish teaching?

I work with doctors in training, so my favorite thing to teach about is decision fatigue and how to avoid it. No one knows when they're getting decision fatigued, but medical training can push you toward that point every day. Unfortunately, decision fatigue plays a big role in errors and bad decision-making—especially in medicine.

What's your least useful talent?

All my talents are useful! I sew, I make soap and candles, I love to garden. I joke that I don't have time for hobbies that are useless!

What UChicago moment will you never forget?

I was the resident in the medical intensive care unit one night when a lot of patients got really sick around the same time. The faculty and the fellow had gone home for the night when this very senior faculty member called to see how I was doing (which, by the way, was not well). All I could do was say, "All hell's breaking loose," and then I literally hung up on him. I still can't believe I did that. But rather than tell me I was rude, they sent me help that night and again the next morning. It was a great lesson that when you need help, help will be there for you. You don't have to worry about hierarchy because we're all there to care for our patients.



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